'Role played by Cartoons Indian Print Media: A Semiotics Analysis of few Cartoons of Selected Indian English Dailies'

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ABSTRACT

Cartoons are a special type of communication that allows for the subliminal delivery of messages while also producing humour without offending anyone. The drawings can express a reality that is both bitter and sweet without using words. A cartoon is made up of several components, signs, or symbols that have a certain meaning. To recognize that a semiotics analysis was done. Cartoons on current hot topics throughout the data collecting period were analyzed using Ferdinand de Saussure's model. Press cartoons may be created on any type of topic, including political and social ones. Cartoons can depict local, regional, national, or even international issues depending on where they are drawn. However, the majority of the cartoons in the three chosen newspapers—The Indian Express, The Hindu, and Times of India—were drawn on national concerns. The study also includes the frequency of cartoons published during the three months of data collection which simultaneously describes how much importance is given to cartoons by the particular Indian English newspaper under the study. The highest number of cartoons were published by the Times of India. Whereas, The Hindu newspaper has the lowest frequency of cartoons comparatively. The Indian Express newspaper has significant consistency in publishing cartoons. Overall, this study emphasizes how cartoons are portrayed differently on a common issue by each selected Indian English dailies and what the signs, symbols or elements used by cartoonists to convey the message., It also describes the frequency at which cartoons are published and what level of issues are focused on majorly by the cartoonists or newspapers.

Keywords: Cartoons, newspapers, semiotics, communication, print media

INTRODUCTION

To inform readers of everyday events in a funny way, newspapers put up comics. The purpose of this cartoon is to make the concept of a problem or an issue better using pictorial presentation so that readers can find out more about it. Thus, "cartoons may be simply defined as funny drawings, separated into political or editorial, which use caricature, humour, and satire to comment on present-day affairs and have an impact on public opinion, and social or gag, which pokes amusing at day-by-day existence and its issues or simply illustrate jokes." (Lent, 2008).

There is a lot of proof to signify that the message is extra without difficulty registered if provided with humour and primarily based on pictures. As a medium of mass communication, cartoons appeal to each expert and lay people. They are broadly read, shared, and laughed about, and are vital elements of social discourse. Therefore, cartoons replicate what the general public unearths as absurd, worrisome, and applicable without always being capable of saying (Giarelli and Tulman, 2003).

Analysis of cartoons is a proven means of gaining access to unstated beliefs, worries, prejudices, expectations, and the taken without any consideration history the public applies whilst mastering new ideas in society, including fitness care. The energy of the cartoon appears to be within side the aggregate of photographs and humour. Humour is useful to lighten up the textual content and to offer variety, and the photograph contributes to the efficiency of the message.

1.1 What is a cartoon?

Cartoons are a form of visual art that are often produced in an exaggerated or semi-realistic manner and are often animated. The exact definition has changed over time, but in modern usage, it usually refers to "an image or series of images intended to be parody, satirical or humorous; or a movie that uses a series of illustrations to animate the action" (2023) Retrieved from https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/cartoon. In the first sense, animators are called cartoonists, and in the second sense, they are often called animators.

This idea was first used to describe a preparatory sketch for a work of art, such as a painting, fresco, tapestry, or stained glass window in the Middle Ages. Cartoons first appeared in Punch magazine in 1843 and became popular in the 19th century. Political cartoons and comic books were also made from this material (Backer, 2023). Political cartoons and comic strips were then also produced using it. Early in the 20th century, as the medium developed, it started to be used to describe animated movies that looked like print cartoons.

1.2 Definition of Cartoon

The Museum of Cartoon Art defines a cartoon as —any whimsical, facetious graphic expression that parodies any aspect of human behaviour. (Walker M., 2000). According to Joseph Conrad, —A caricature is putting the face of a joke on the body of a truth. (Navasky V., 2013)

1.3 Origin of Cartoons

The original form of the term "cartoon" was the Italian word cartoon, which means "large paper." In the sixteenth century, cartoons were initially used for fresco painting when a pigment was applied to a wet lime plaster wall and then transferred to a plaster wall after being generated on paper. Visual communication was essential in the ancient world because there was no such thing as written communication. Images are thus a special resource for

any civilization. Ancient peoples painted artwork that signified sacred symbols and messages on the cave walls (Metcalfe, 2022).

1.4 Cartoon and Media

In 1843, when wall paintings and cartoons were to be used to decorate the Houses of Parliament, the word "cartoon" was first used in the magazine Punch. The expression, which is intended to indicate comic drawing, gained notoriety because of the Punch's frequent usage. The British weekly magazine Punch, sometimes known as The London Charivari, was sarcastic and hilarious.

Henry Mayhew and the engraver Ebenezer Landells created the magazine in 1841, and it was shut down in 1992 as a result of dwindling popularity. On May 9, 1754, "The Pennsylvania Gazette," a publication run by Benjamin Franklin, featured the first political cartoon ever printed in America   (Metcalfe, 2022).

1.5 Relevance of Cartoons in Print Media

Cartoons were employed in India to spread ideas and effect change. Political cartoons and the popular press were used as tools to communicate change and information. Many freedom fighters made use of this platform to express their ideas both during and after the struggle for freedom.

Political cartoons typically decorate a little area of a newspaper, yet they have a significant impact on readers. A cartoon may say a lot in a short number of words. The political cartoons' motivations are real, and even if they are scathing, they are viewed with laughter.

Readers can better comprehend national sentiment by viewing cartoons. They aid in our comprehension of the nation's social, political, cultural, and economic facets. Because they are straightforward, appealing, and humorous, cartoons appeal to both children and adults. Consequently, readers will be affected in a lasting way. Cartoons relieve boredom, convey irony through illustrative drawings, and arouse emotions through imaginative play.

Cartoons assist in expressing viewpoints. One such is the sharp-nosed caricature of Indira in a crisis. We can better understand things thanks to visual metaphors. Cartoons assist journalists and cartoonists in deftly presenting and commenting on subjects that are governed by the government.

The editorial column, where cartoonists present the public viewpoint through cartoons, attracts the attention of decision-makers. Both entertaining and persuasive, cartoons. They inspire readers to create opinions and make decisions. Cartoons help readers of print media learn concepts more quickly, retain information better, and share an experience.

1.5 Types of Cartoons

Cartoons are of two types – (1) Single framed cartoons and (2) Multi-framed cartoons

    (1) Single-framed cartoons are further of the following types:

(a) Political cartoon

Political cartoons are also known as editorial cartoons. A cartoon is a drawing that expresses the cartoonist's viewpoint through comments. An editorial cartoonist is a cartoonist who creates such cartoons both verbally and visually. In order to challenge the status quo and draw attention to social evils including violence, corruption, and political unrest, they frequently mix creative flair, hyperbole, and humour.

Typically, political cartoons offer a visual commentary on the news. They are frequently sarcastic rather than merely humorous, and they may express the cartoonist's political views or add to an editorial opinion piece in a newspaper or magazine.

In other words, they convey the cartoonist's perspective on the political issues they depict in their drawings. However, political cartoons occasionally express ideas that the government is attempting to suppress.

(b) Gag Cartoon

A single-panel cartoon with a caption usually makes up a gag cartoon (also known as a panel cartoon or gag panel). Sometimes there is no caption and occasionally conversation appears in speech balloons. The cartoonist frequently takes delight in creating a comedy drawing that is entertaining even without a caption. Gags can come from any sphere of society. It might have to do with work, a profession, or simply an occasion.

As the name suggests—"gag" is a show business term for a comic idea—these cartoons are frequently made with the intention of making people laugh.

"'Invade Mesopotamia'? — I may be crazy, but I'm not *stupid!*"

(c) **Illustrative cartoons**

Illustration is a visual representation of any written text, including editorial articles, news articles, advertisements, and other types of textual writing. A cartoon, caricature, painting, or drawing can be used as an illustration.
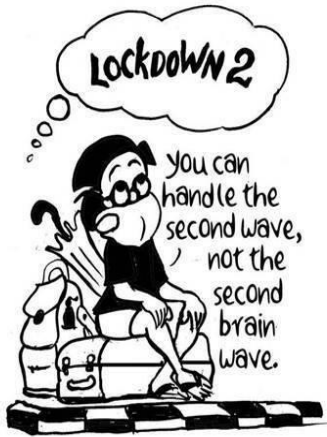
(2) Multi-framed cartoons are of the following types:

(a) **Comic strips or Panels**

Cartoons in comic strips typically feature multiple panels. They often consist of a number of amusing illustrations combined with a comedic storyline. The punchline typically appears in the final panel. Because animation is essentially just a series of images combined one after another to give the impression that the characters are moving, it resembles comic strip cartoons in some ways.

(b) **Comic Book**

Comic panels are arranged side by side to depict storylines in a comic book, sometimes referred to as a comic magazine. Speech balloons are used for the dialogue in these panels. Superhero escapades are frequently featured in comic comics. The pictures below are examples of comic book cartoons.

(c) **Animated cartoon**

Motion pictures are what we call these cartoons. These are a collection of illustrations, pictures or graphic representations of computers. In an animated cartoon, frames from different cartoons are combined one after another to give the impression that all of the characters are moving. Animated cartoons include Tom and Jerry, Oggy and the cockroaches, Motu-Patlu, Goofy, and others.


1.6 Semiotics

The Greek term semeion, which means sign or mark, is the root of the English word semiotics. It is the study of symbols, signs, and their interpretations. It also covers the study of symbolism, allusion, simile, metaphor, and irony. It also includes a study of how signs are used and behave. The father of semiotics is the Swiss linguist Ferdinand De Saussure because he initially proposed the concept. He was born on November 26, 1857, and passed away on February 22, 1913. He made a substantial contribution to both linguistics and semiotics, and Charles Sanders Peirce worked hard to further semiotics after him.

Denotation and connotation are the two notions that semiotics works with. Denotation refers to a sign's precise meaning or dictionary definition, whereas connotation is the suggestive, emotional, or imaginative meaning of the sign.

For example, the picture below is a visual sign. The denotation of the picture is a pigeon of white colour and the connotation of it is that a white pigeon is a symbol of peace, honour and love and it also symbolizes sacrifice. Even the bird dove also symbolizes love and peace.

At that time, Ferdinand De Saussure gave semiotics the name "semiology." The Saussurean model, a dyadic model for sign interpretation, was introduced by him. A sign, in his model, consists of two components: a signifier and a signified. The sign itself is the signifier (significant), and the meaning attached to the sign is the signified. The term "signification" refers to the connection between the signifier and the signified.
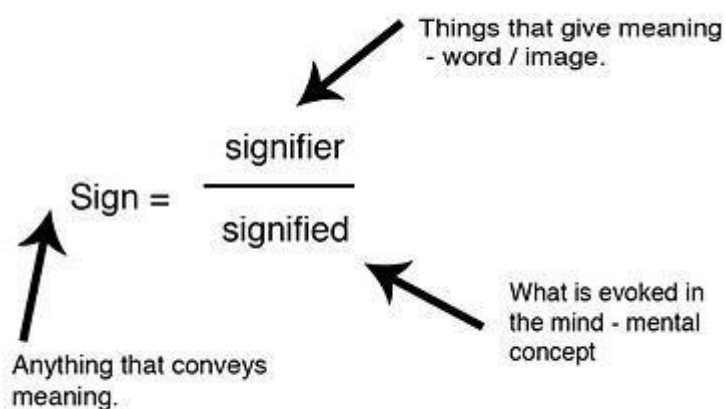
Saussure claimed that the signifier and the signified were entirely psychological in characteristics and referred to the signified's mental nature as a concept. The relationship between the signifier and the signified, according to Saussure, is arbitrary. For instance, the word dog, Chien, or Perro is verbal indicators for animals and are arbitrary for a mental

image of the animal that is produced in the mind. The animal is not what the word dog signifies; rather, it is a mental picture of the signifier.

Roland Gerard Barthes was a French critic, philosopher, theorist and semiotician. He did very impactful work in the development of linguistic areas, including social theory, literary theories, semiotics, structuralism, post-structuralism and anthropology. He introduced elements of semiology, in his book —Elements of Semiology. These are (i) Language and Speech, (ii) Signified and Signifier, (iii) Syntagm and System and (iv) Denotation and Connotation.

1.6.1 Signs

The term "sign" refers to anything in the world that conveys meaning, including words, pictures, music, gestures, body posture, cartoons, and body language. A symbol exists because it has meaning. Everything that can be used to communicate is a sign, which is the smallest unit of meaning.

Ferdinand De Saussure defined a sign as a form that consists of two components: (1) a physical component, such as noises, letters, gestures, etc., which he termed the signifier, and

(2) a conceptual or visual component, which he called the signified.

1.6.2 Symbols

A mark, sign, or word is a symbol if it denotes, represents, or is taken to stand for an idea, an item, or a relationship. To express other ideas and beliefs, symbols can be words, noises, gestures, ideas, or visual pictures.

The nature of symbolic signs is arbitrary. The symbol and what it represents do not resemble one another or have any direct or indirect connections. There are common interpretations for these kinds of symbols. To symbolize an abstract idea, any location, term, object, person, or action might be employed. Doves or pigeons, for instance, represent peace while the colour black denotes death or evil.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(a)   Goswami, H. (2016). Gauhati University, Guwahati, conducted a study entitled — "**A historical overview on political cartooning in India with special reference to Assam**". The study's descriptive approach sought to explore the development of political cartooning in India across time. It had secondary literature as its foundation.

(b)   By assessing the position of cartoonists within his organization, Onakpa, M. (2014), Department of Mass Communication, Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria, conducted a study on "**Cartoons, cartoonists, and effective communication in the Nigeria Print Media**" and came to the conclusion that the cartoonist needs to be improved to position him for greater productivity. The agenda-setting theory is used to analyze the study. The work argues that cartoons influence how people talk about important national issues in public.

(c)   A study on **"Political cartoonists versus readers: Role of political cartoonists in Building public opinion and readers' expectations towards the print media cartoons in Pakistan"** was undertaken by Ashfaq, A., and Hussein, A.B. (2013) at the University Sains Malaysia. The study's major goal was to examine how political cartoons shape public opinion and what Pakistani readers might expect from political cartoons in print media. Additionally, it sought to understand the perspectives that cartoonists had when depicting the problems and events. The questionnaire was chosen as the data collection strategy because the researcher utilized an in-depth interview method to investigate readers' opinions.

(d)   The fundamentals of semiotics are outlined in Chandler, D.'s book "**Semiotics: The Basics**", published in 2007. The development of semiotics from Saussure's semiotics to modern semiotics is discussed in the book. For those new to semiotics, the book provides a brief explanation of each model and theory. The notions of structural and post-structural semiotics are also explained in the book.

(e)   A linguistic model for the analysis of political cartoons was introduced by Jabbar, L. R. (2009), Immam Al-A'Azam University, Baghdad in his paper titled "**A semiotic model for the analysis of political cartoon**" It was hypothesised in this study that political cartoons constitute a collection of cues, both verbal and nonverbal, that are loaded with meaning. A linguistic model was also proposed as a tool for the analysis and interpretation of political cartoons. Only one cartoon from the study was examined using Barhtes' semiotic linguistic model. The study concluded that political cartoons are a conglomeration of signs, and cartoonists use devices like symbolism, exaggeration, irony, and analogy in their works. The study's findings suggest that political cartoons can be examined by using the linguistic model.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to understand the meaning of the cartoons published in the selected English dailies. Broadly, the objectives are mentioned as under:

1. To conduct a semiotic analysis of cartoons of selected English newspapers or dailies
2. To find out the frequency of cartoons displaying various themes like local, regional, state or national, international, etc.

Selection of Newspapers

Three newspapers were selected for the study based on language, and geographical location. The three English newspapers namely Indian Express, The Hindu and Times of India (TOI) published from Delhi were taken into consideration as the study sample.

Analysis Method

Press cartoons related to burning issues and published commonly in all three English newspapers were taken for semiotics analysis. Semiotic analysis is qualitative. However, the study possesses both qualitative as well as quantitative nature. The first objective of the study is qualitative, whereas, the second objective is quantitative.

Hence, to meet the second objective, all the cartoons of the mentioned period and selected dailies were taken for observation.

variable analyzed in the research:

Levels of Issues: Cartoons were divided based on geographical location or area of issues drawn by cartoonists. These levels include:

1. **International Level:** This category includes problems that are experienced on a worldwide scale. These global topics can draw cartoonists' attention and inspire them to create cartoons on an international scale because they have an impact on everyone. For instance, worldwide issues in the national press include the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, Rishi Sunak, gatherings of foreign ministers, and discussions between India and the United States.

2. **National Level:** This covers the problems that occurred on the national level. This category includes every national-importance event or subject matter. Most frequently, national topics are chosen by national newspaper cartoonists to depict in their cartoons.

3. **Regional Level:** This level includes those issues which occur in a particular region. For example, legislative elections, any scheme which is run by the government of a particular state etc. It depends on the cartoonist whether he/she selects regional issues or not. If the regional issue or any aspect of that issue affects the whole nation, then it will fall in the National Level category.

4. **Local Level:** This covers local issues. However, there are few opportunities for local level issues to be chosen by national newspapers.

3.6.2 Visual Lexicon- The below explanations and pictures of terms of the lexicon of cartoons have been taken from the book — "The Lexicon of Comicana" by Mort Walker. (The lexicon of comicana, 2000)

Agitrons - These are the wiggly lines that show around a shaking or moving object or character.

Agitron

[AGITRONS]

Plewds - These are part of Emanata (explained below), these are sweat droplets that are drawn around the head of the character when working hard, feared, stressed, crying etc.

Briffits - These are the dust cloud that shows the quick departure of an object or character.

Fumetti - Fumetti is the Italian word for balloon. Fumetti is speech balloon drawn above the character's head and it contains what the character is thinking or saying. A fumetti can be of any shape and each cartoonist has his own shape of speech balloon.

It can be circular, oval, rectangular, cumulus, irregular or sometimes without border.

Neoflect - This is also a part of Emanata (explained below), neoflects are drawn by the cartoonist to show the sparkling surface of a character or object.

Onomatopoeia - These are the words that imitate natural sound and cartoonists usually like to use onomatopoeic words in their drawings to show sound effects. For example, dog's bark bow-bow, cat's meow-meow, sounds of wind such as whizz, swoosh, whisper, bees' buzz etc.
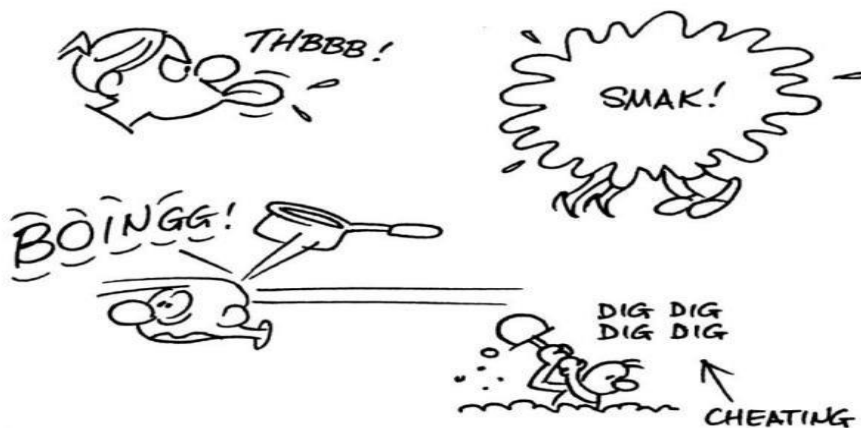
Emanta - Emanata are drawn around the heads of the characters to show emotions and internal feelings.

Other emanata reveal internal conditions.

Man with squeans — slightly drunk.

Man with squeans and a spurl — loaded!

Squeans, spurl, crottle eyed, surmounted by thrush — it's "never-again" time!

Waftarom Shows that the pie smells good.

Indotherm The coffee is hot.

**Solrads** You can almost feel the warmth radiating from the sun.

Lapsebeams Used by cartoonists to show that time has passed.

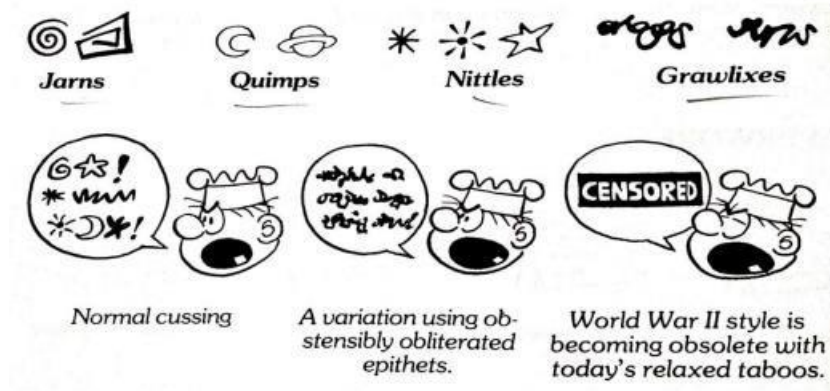**Neoflect** Lets us know that something is spanking new.

Sphericasia - These are curved and circular lines that show the movement of anything in a circular motion. These lines can be drawn in vertical circular motion as well as in horizontal also. A complete spherical is known as a swalloop.

Briffit · Swalloop · Whitope · Volunteer
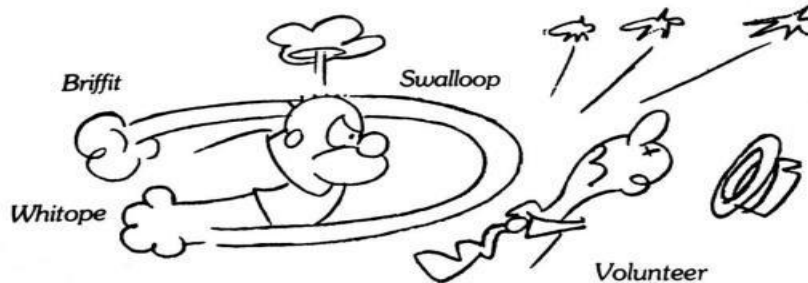
Lucaflect - Lucaflect are used by cartoonist to show if object or the area is round in shape,wet or shiny.


Maladicta - These are the symbols standing for vulgarity or ungodliness or obscenity,

appearing in the speech balloon instead of actual dialogue. Maladicta consists of jarns, quimps, nettles and grawlixes.

Jarns   Quimps   Nittles   Grawlixes

Normal cussing   A variation using ob-stensibly obliterated epithets.   World War II style is becoming obsolete with today's relaxed taboos.

Vites - Vites are the vertically drawn lines to show the shine on a floor.

Hites - Hites are the horizontally drawn lines that show the speed of an object or character.

Dites - Dites are diagonally drawn lines to indicate mirror or glass.

HITES   VITES   DITES   BRIFFIT W/ HITES   HURRY!
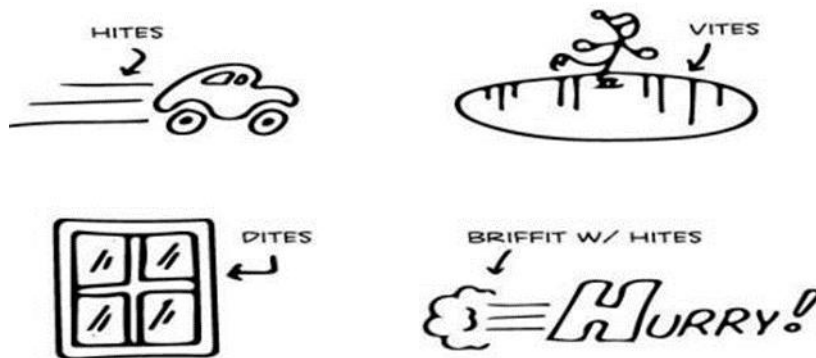
Blurgits - Blurgits are formed with the combination of hites, agitrons, etc. to show the quick movement of character.

BERRY'S WORLD   "Worst case of Russian flu I've seen!"
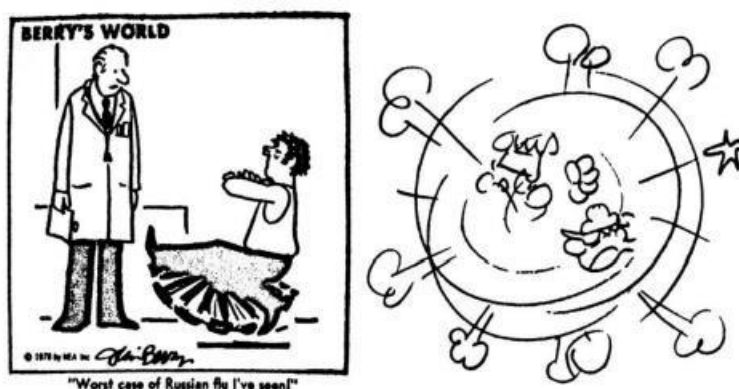
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis of press cartoons includes the analysis of 237 cartoons based on the level of issues such as international, national, regional, local etc. on

which cartoons were portrayed by the cartoonist of the newspaper under the study. The quantitative data is represented with the help of a bar graph and table.
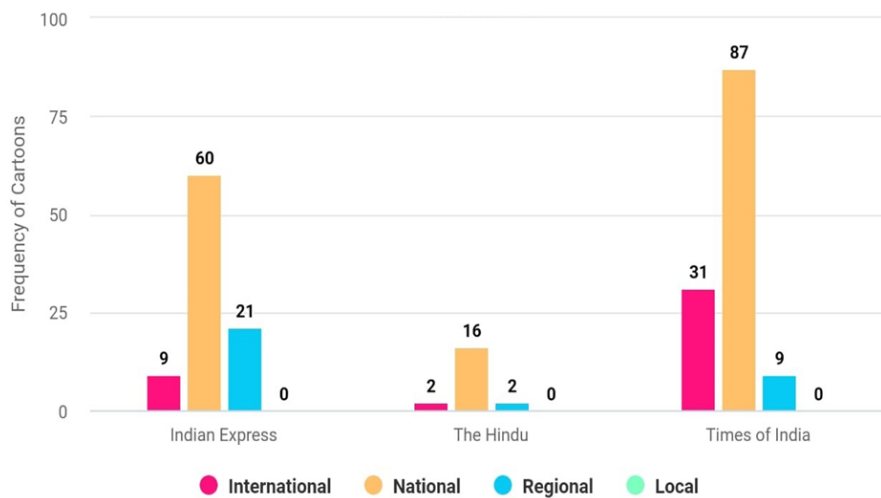
Bar Graph representing the level of issues of cartoons published in the selected newspaper On the X-axis the selected Indian English dailies/newspapers are shown. Whereas, Y- the axis represents the frequency of cartoons published in the newspaper shown on the X- axis. The bar represents the number of cartoons based on their geographical location which is divided into international, national, regional and local issues. Different colours are used for the bars to portray different issues which are also depicted below the X-axis at the bottom of the graph.

Table 1: Level of Issues of press cartoons published in the newspaper under the study

Newspapers ➜	The Indian Express	The Hindu	Times of India (TOI)	Total
Level of Issues ↓				
International	9 (10%)	2 (10%)	31 (24.41%)	42 (17.72%)
National	60 (66.66%)	16 (80%)	87 (68.50%)	163 (68.78%)
Regional	21 (23.33%)	2 (10%)	9 (7.09%)	32 (13.50%)
Local	-	-	-	-
Total	90 (100%)	20 (100%)	127 (100%)	237 (100%)

The table represents similar data which is shown visually through the graph. It is drawn for a better understanding of the quantitative data. The rows of the table show

the level of issues of press cartoons and columns represent the selected Indian English newspaper. It is found that the majority of cartoons were portrayed on national level issues which holds around 69% of 237 cartoons. It is also observed that the maximum cartoons on international issues were portrayed by the "Times of India" newspaper. However, The Indian Express newspaper stands on top in terms of portraying maximum regional cartoons among all 3 newspapers. There is no local-level cartoon was published by the newspaper under the study.

4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

In qualitative data analysis, 10 press cartoons from the population of X of the selected Indian English newspapers/ dailies were analyzed by applying Ferdinand De Saussure's theory of semiotics. The cartoons were selected based on burning issues that occurred during the period of data collection i.e. January 2023 to March 2023. The burning issues on which cartoon is published commonly in all three or any two of three selected Indian English newspapers/ dailies is considered for semiotic analysis. The reason behind the selection is to understand how the newspapers/ dailies under the study portray the cartoons based on common issues.

Hence, purposive sampling technique is adopted for the qualitative analysis. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which units are selected based on the purpose to get the desired characteristics in the sample for research. Total 7 issues were selected, which got maximum number of cartoons published in the newspapers under the study. These issues are as under:

- New Year
- G20
- Joshimath
- Bharat JodoYatra
- NaatuNaatu
- Paathan
- Rahul Gandhi's Defamation Case

Only 3 cartoons were selected from the newspaper – The Hindu, due to low publications of cartoons. Whereas, the remaining 7 cartoons were selected from the Indian Express and Times of India (TOI) newspaper. All the Indian English newspapers/dailies under the study are of Delhi edition. Hence, the total number of cartoons that were analyzed semiotically based on 7 burning issues is 23. For semiotic analysis, Ferdinand de Saussure's model of semiotics was applied.

Issue No. 1: New Year

Here, New Year is not any conflict or any occurrence of event. As usual, New Year is the first day of the new calendar year which begins on January 1 of every year. The purpose behind selecting this day was to understand or analyze how all three selected newspaper portrays it or how they start the year in terms of cartoon publication.

Cartoon 1
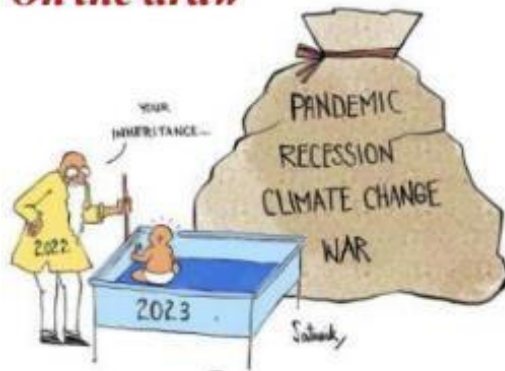
Signifier:

The above cartoon drawn by Satwik, was published in "The Hindu" newspaper on January 1, 2023. The image consists of three things – First, the frail old man with the glasses on the eyes and a stick in his hand for the support to stand who is the symbol of 2022 looking at the little child. Second, the little or newly born child represents the New Year i.e. 2023 who is looking at the old man with a surprise. The third object is a big bag which is comprised of pandemic, recession, climate change and war.

Signified:

Background: The cartoonist used a big bag as an object in the background which is comprised of the pandemic, recession, climate change and war – the set of events that occurred in 2022, to show the things that come along in 2023 from 2022 as an unwilling or unwanted gift.

Objects: Besides the bag, another object is the bassinet in which the newborn baby symbolized as 2023 is kept. Here, the bassinet is used to support the child's character and it also works as a boundary of protection for the child which keeps the child from the misfortunes of 2022.

Characters: Two characters are visible in the cartoon – an old man and a newborn baby. 2022 is the end of the year or becomes an old or past year which is portrayed as an old man. Whereas, 2023 the beginning of another year or New Year is pictured as a newborn infant.

Text: The cartoon is textual. The old man comments two words looking at the child "Your inheritance" which are written entirely in capital letters in the cartoon to give it an emphasis to convey the message of the whole scenario. This also signifies that the old man informs the child about the events that come from his time i.e. 2022 to the child labelled as 2023.

Lexicon of Cartoon:

Neoflect: The lines drawn above the newborn infant heads show the newness or shine of the child (2023). It also reflects the child as surprised by the old man or his words.

Core Meaning: The cartoonist has shown the old man as the symbol of 2022 and the newborn baby as the New Year i.e. 2023. The words of the old man suggest that the war, recession, pandemic, and climate change are the things inherited by 2023 from the year 2022. It describes that this year is also somewhere impacted by the happenings of the past.

Cartoon 2

CLASSIC LAXMAN

Hello, I said,
Happy New Year!
FIRST PUBLISHED ON JAN 1, 1964

Signifier

The cartoon above is from the "Times of India (TOI)" newspaper dated January 1, 2023, and it represents two characters – RK Laxman's most beloved "the common man" character and his second is his wife. The common man is sitting on a chair and reading the newspaper and his wife is shown in the kitchen. The cartoon is textual which conveys the message of New Year greetings from his wife to the man who is lost in reading the newspaper.

Signified:

Background: The cartoonist has drawn the hanging clothes, kitchen, bed, chair, switchboard etc. showing that the scene is set up in the home of a common man. Instead of a luxurious house, all these elements depict a normal small house and a simplified way of living of a common man which is found quite obvious in the cartoons of RK Laxman.

Object: The main object in the cartoon is the newspaper that the man is reading it symbolizes the crimes and mishaps in the year. Another supporting object is the hanging coat or shirt in the background, which is the iconic sign of the clothes that the main character, the common man used to wear. He has his style of fashion which displays simplicity instead of showing off. The chair portrays the comfort of living a simple life with limited needs, wants or desires. Characters: There are two characters

in the cartoon as mentioned above. The man in dhoti is reading a newspaper which is full of bad news or news of crimes, mishaps, misfortunes, tragedies, etc. and hence due to this, the facial expression of the man portrays that he is worried, frustrated or feeling bad about it. On the other hand, the lady is shown happy as she is unknown to this and as it's Jan 1, early morning she's dressed up in a saree, working in the kitchen, and also greets the man, his husband – a happy new year. However, the man his lost in the newspaper and didn't seem to respond to her.

Text: The text in the newspaper describes crimes, disasters, mishaps, etc. as mentioned above. However, the text below the cartoon conveys that the wife of the man had wished the man a new year but he hadn't replied to it because he was busy reading the newspaper and therefore, she's wishing him again. Another line after the message which suggests the date of first publication as on Jan 1, 1964, signifies that even on Jan 1, 2023, the situation are same as it used to be in past or years ago.

Core meaning: The cartoon describes that the man is busy reading newspapers which consist of crime, accidents, tragedies, mishaps, disasters, etc. and does not respond to his wife who wished him a new year. The wife again greets her hoping the greetings back from him. The date of first publication portrays that even in the New Year i.e. 2023 the situation is the same as it was in 1964.

Cartoon 3

Signifier:

The above cartoon is drawn by E. P. Unny and published in the "The Indian Express" newspaper dated January 1, 2023. There are two objects and one character which can be seen in the cartoon. Two objects are two different year calendars, one is of 2023 and another is of the year 2024. The character in the mask is partially hidden behind the second calendar and his facial expressions portray that he is thinking about something. It is a textual cartoon which conveys the meaning using words.

Signified:

Background: There are no specific elements shown as such in the background, it's completely plain. However, the major focus is on the object and text is also there in the cartoon which maybe there's no specific place left to portray anything else. It may be done by the cartoonist intentionally to keep the calendar as the central point. Even the character itself is shown behind the second newspaper.

Object: There are two objects in the cartoon as mentioned earlier. The calendar of 1 January 2023 grabs the central position as it is the same date on which the cartoon is published and it's the beginning of New Year. Another noticeable thing is that in the calendar of 2024, instead of a date, an event is mentioned – LokSabha Elections. It signifies that to elect the members of 18thLokSabha, the general elections will be held in 2024.

Characters: The cartoon has a single character which is partially hidden behind the calendar. His facial expressions portray that he is thinking about something and hoping best for 2024. Here, instead of focusing on the New Year or the current year, the character is more concerned about the upcoming year i.e. 2024.

Text: The text includes three words – "Happy Next Year!" This signifies that the character is hoping for better results in the Lok Sabha election which is expected to be held next year i.e. in

2024. It's tricky how cartoonist has replaced the focus of cartoon by converting the word

"New" to "Next".

Core Meaning: The cartoon emphasizes the next year 2024 instead of the New Year 2023 even after placing the calendar of 2023 in the centre. The major reason behind emphasizing

2024 is the conduct of an important event – the Lok Sabha Election and the character's expectations of better results for the same.

Issue No. 2 G20

G20 stands for Group of 20 which is comprised of 19 countries and the European Union aims to address the issues related to finance like financial inclusion, green finance, global economic growth, etc. and Sherpa-related issues like climate change, agriculture and food security, UN sustainable development goals, etc. For the year 2023, India has the presidency of G20. India has planned 215 meetings in a way that all the state capitals and union territories get the opportunity to host at least one major event during India's G20 Presidency. Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and European Union – all are the members of G20.

Cartoon 4

JUST LIKE THAT — AJIT NINAN
G20 CONCERT
Baron of the Baton
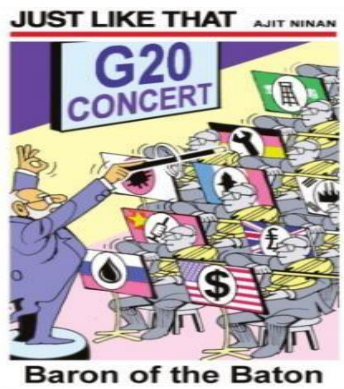
Signifier:

The above cartoon was published in the "Times of India" newspaper dated 2 March 2023. The cartoonist Ajit Ninan has portrayed several characters and multiple symbols. However, PM

Narendra Modi is the main character portrayed as baron of the baton –the rank of the World's greatest conductors held by Zubin Mehta, in reality. Hence, the G20 is shown as a concert led by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi.

Signified:

Background: It consists of two elements – an object and colour. A banner is used on which "G20 Concert" is written which signifies G20 as a concert and Modi is leading it as baron of the baton. The banner is meaningful because it supports the theme of the cartoon as well as the main character. However, the colour indigo purple is used to represent India's presidency of G20. The clothes of the character are also painted in a light shade of purple. Hence, the background colour supports it by existing and increasing its visibility.

Object: The main object of the cartoon is the stick known as baton which is held on by PM.

It is generally used by the leader of an orchestra. Hence, it is used as the symbol of India's G20 presidency as well as the great leadership of PM Modi. The other object includes boards or flags of different countries which are the members of G20. It also has various symbols above flags which represent the issues related to finance, sustainable goals, etc. on which the meeting is scheduled.

Character: The central character of the cartoon is PM Narendra Modi portrayed as Baron of the Baton which signifies that he has the control of G20 which is also signified as concert. It perfectly portrays the Presidency of G20 in the hands of India which is leaded by the PM Modi. The other characters in the cartoon are the members of G20 and are representing their respective countries and issues related to meet. They are shown playing violin which represents their participation in G20 meets. Also, they are playing the instrument as instructed by Modi as Baron of Baton which again portrays the India's presidency.

Text: Cartoons conveys a single message via label and caption which are closely related to each other and also supports in establishing the theme in a way by portraying G20 as a concert. It is conveyed through the banner on which "G20 Concert" is written and the three words below the cartoon "Baron of Baton". Lexicon of Cartoon:

Agitrons: The agitrons around the Modi's hand portrays the active participation of Modi in G20. It also used around the hands of members of different countries that are playing the violin which shows the movement or active participation and involvement of the members in G20.

Sphericasia: Drawn around the baton to depict the movement in circular notion again represents the active participation and constant or continuous involvement in G20

Core meaning: The entire cartoon has portrayed G20 as the concert which represent the PM Modi as a Baron of Baton that means the leader of the event as India has the presidency of G20 for this year. Different countries which are the member or part of G20 are also shown actively performing in the meet held on various issues like climate change, financial inclusion, sustainable goals, etc. under the leadership of Modi as a representative of India.

Cartoon 5

Signifier:

This cartoon is drawn by Ajit Ninan and was published in Times of India newspaper dated

February 25, 2023. A terrestrial globe is portrayed which is made up of flag of different countries. Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is shown holding the globe and various posters with different symbols are shown flying around it. The theme of the cartoon is G20 as depicted from the label and the entire cartoon is named as Green Energy Spin.

Signified:

Background: Background has no significant element and it is plain and painted with three colors – dark black, light pink and white using gradient effect.

Object: Terrestrial globe is the main object of the cartoon which indicates the members of G20 that are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia,

Italy, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and European Union by portraying flags of respective countries. Other than that banners with wings are drawn which consists of different symbols related to issue of green energy that symbolizes green mobility, green fuel, green building, green equipment etc.

Character: The cartoon has single character – Prime Minister Narendra Modi which is shown holding the globe represents that India has the presidency of G20 and the summit is highly supported through the active involvement under the leadership of Modi.

Text: It is a non-textual cartoon. However, the terrestrial globe is labelled as G20 and below it the cartoon is named as Green Energy Spin as it portrays the issues related to green energy under the G20 summit.

Lexicon of Cartoon:

Agitrons: It is drawn around the wings of banners which contains symbol of issues related to green energy to show the flying movement.

Sphericasia: Drawn around the terrestrial globe supported by the hands of Modi depicts the usual circular motion of globe which also conveys the active involvement of Modi and other member countries of G20.

Core Meaning: Issues related to green energy under the G20 are portrayed by the cartoonist. The globe is made up of flags which represents all the 20 member countries of G20 and is hold on by Narendra Modi portrayed as the stand of it which represents India's G20 presidency.
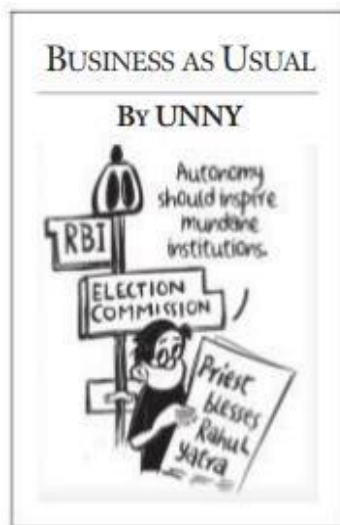
Issue No. 4 Bharat Jodo Yatra

Bharat Jodo Yatra was a mass movement led by the Indian National Congress. Headed by the Congress leader Rahul Gandhi the padayatra was scheduled to cover a distance of 3500 km by walking from Kanyakumari to Kashmir within 150 days from 7 September 2022 to 30

January, 2023. Its tagline was "Mile Kadam, Judey Vatan" or "Walk Together, Unite the Country." Launched with the motive to fight against divisive politics, hatred,

communalism, inflation and unemployment, it has covered 12 States and 2 Union Territories and was joined by 118 politicians and thousands of people throughout the way.

Cartoon 6

Signifier:

Published on 5 January, 2023 in The Indian Express newspaper, the cartoon is drawn by E P

Unny. It has portrayed a boy holding newspaper which consists of news related to Rahul's Bharat Jodo Yatra. Behind it a stand with few boards is shown which represents RBI and Election comission.

Signified:

Background: It is plain white and has no significant element.

Object: The main object of the cartoon is the newspaper on which it is written that priest blesses Rahul yatra which conveys represents the visit of Ram temple by Rahul Gnadhi during the yatra where he was blessesd by the Chief priest of Ram temple, Acharya Satyendra Das. Another object is the rod which has direction boards named RBI and Election Commission in capital letters portrays the other current issues related to it.

Character: It has a single character – a boy who is holding newspaper whose thoughts is conveyed through the text.

Text: It is a textual cartoon with a message that conveys that the autonomy should inspire mundane institutions which depicts the issue of objection by many political leader on the blessing given by the priest.

Core meaning: The cartoonist has portrayed the issue of objection and questions raised on the blessing of priest. It is indicated through the use of newspaper, direction board as well as the message conveyed through the text.


Issue No. 5 Naatu Naatu

"Naatu Naatu" is a popular telugu language song from the film RRR and is composed by M. M. Keeravani with lyrics by Chandrabose. The song was also released in hindi language as "Naacho Naacho" and also in several other language. The hook step of the dance performed by

the lead actors of RRR – N. T. Raman Rao Jr. and Ram Charan went viral on social media. It became the first song from the Indian film to win the Academy Award and the

Golden Globe Award for Best Original Song. RRR director Rajamouli conceived "Naatu

Naatu" as a kind of fight sequence in which the Indian duo outdance their British counterparts. The song has crossed over 200 million views in all the languages.

Telangana state BJP president and Karminagar MP Sanjay Kumar Bandi has accused Rajamouli, the director of RRR for distorting historical facts and had warned him that if the film RRR shown in the theatre, he will put the theatre on fire. However, Rajamouli clarified everything and denied the changes suggested by him. Later, on winning globes award he congratulates the entire team of RRR.

Cartoon 7
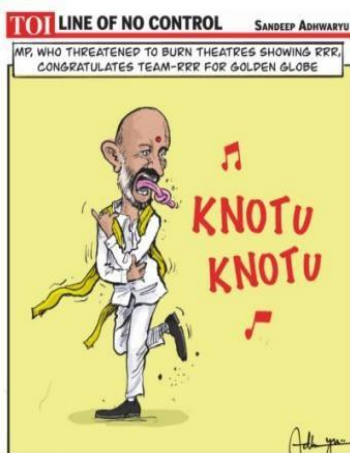
Signifier:

The above cartoon is drawn by the cartoonist Sandeep Adhwaryu and was published on 15 January, 2023 in the Times of India newspaper. BJP president of Telangana state, MP Sanjay Kumar Bandi is portrayed performing dance on the song. The tongue has knot and Knotu Knotu is written instead of Naatu Naatu.

Signified:

Background: It is plain yellow and has no significant element.

Object: There is no object portrayed in the cartoon.

Character: As mentioned earlier, MP Sanjay Kumar Bandi is portrayed in the cartoon who is shown dancing on the song. A knot is tied on his tongue which depicts the silence and shock on winning of Globe Award for the song "Naatu Naatu" from the film RRR.

Text: It is a non-textual cartoon. Knotu Knotu is written to give emphasize on the knot tied on the tongue of the character. On the top of the cartoon it is stated that MP who earlier accused or threatened the director on showing film in the theatre, congratulates the entire RRR team for winning Globe Award.

Lexicon of Cartoon:

Agitrons: It is drawn around the body of the character to depict the movement of body parts or the action of dancing.

Core Meaning: The cartoon portrays what it has conveyed through the text on the top of a cartoon that is the MP who threatened and warned the director about showing the film in the theatre now congratulates the entire team on winning the globe award. He is also shown dancing to the song in the cartoon.

Cartoon 8

Signifier: The above cartoon is drawn by the cartoonist Sandeep Adhwaryu and was published on 14 March, 2023 in the Times of India newspaper. Two men are shown walking together, one has newspaper in hand which has picture of an Award. A message related to the song "Naatu Naatu" is conveyed through the text. **Signified:**

Background: It is plain white and has no siginificant element.

Object: Newspaper with the image of an Award is the only object of the cartoon which depicts the victory of RRR film song "Naatu Naatu" in Globe Awards.

Character: Two men shown walking or performing hook step in the style of lead actors of RRR film which again reminds of the song Naatu Naatu.

Text: Text suggests the Naatu Naatu as being unapologetically Indian and not seeking validation from west which conveys that the film director did not apologised to the political leader like MP Sanjay kumar Bandi who threatened for not showing film in the theatre as its scene hurts the sentiments which later clarified by the film director.

Lexicon of Cartoon:

Hites: The line drawn below the shoes of both the men indicates the speed or movement of the feet.

Core meaning: Cartoonist has tried to portray the meaning of Naatu Naatu in his own terms by suggesting it as being unapologetically Indian and not seeking the validation from west which is conveyed through the text. The style of two men and the newspaper are the symbol of song Naatu Naatu.

Issue No. 6 Pathaan

Pathaan is a hindi language bollywood action film directed by Siddharth Anand. The cast of film includes Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, John Abraham, Dimple Kapadia and Ashutosh Rana. The movie had faced several controversies before the release. It was opposed by the audience by calling it unholy and stating that it hurts the religious sentiment as Deepika Padukone is seen in the saffron color bikni in the song "Besharam Rang" which was perceived by many as portrayal of saffron rang the color of saint, hinduism as Besharam rang. Protests were staged to boycott the movie and was laso criticized by many politicans and netizens on social media platform. However, Pathaan become the highest grossing film in India with box office collection of US $130 million worldwide.

Cartoon 9

Signifier:

The above cartoon is drawn by the cartoonist Sandeep Adhwaryu and was published on 27 January, 2023 in the Times of India newspaper. Two men are shown in the cartoon, out of which one is shown holding the heart. Deepika Padukone and Shah Rukh Khan are portrayed in the background and audience is also drawn in dark shade color.

Signified:

Background: The lead actor and actress of the film Pathaan are portrayed in the background. Deepika Padukone and Shah Rukh Khan are the symbol of the movie. Audience is also portrayed in dark shades of black and brown shown enjoying the movie.

Object: A rod in the hand of a man is the only object in the cartoon. It indicate the man as a protester of the film.

Character: Two men are shown in the cartoon. They are worried or hurt on watching the scene of movie in which Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone shown together. One man is shown holding his heart as his hand is shown on the chest that indicates that his sentiments are hurt.

Text: Message suggests that the sentiments of the man are hurt in actual after watching the movie.

Lexicon of Cartoon:

Agitrons: It is drawn around the hand of man to indicate the movement of hand or beating of heart.

Fumetti: A speech ballon is used to conveys the message through the text.

Core meaning: Cartoonist has portrayed the scene of Pathaan movie which is enjoyed by many but hurts the sentiment of two men portrayed in the cartoon may be because the actor and actress are shown close to each other.

Issue No. 7 Rahul Gandhi's Defamation Case

Recently, Congress Leader Rahul Gandhi as a Member of Parliaments is sentenced to 2 years in jail in a 2019 Defamation case over his remarks on the Prime Minister Narendra Modi by Surat Court. During the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections, Rahul Gandhi had made a remark on the surname "Modi" saying "Why do all the thieves, be it Nirav Modi, Lalit Modi or Narendra Modi, have Modi in their names?" The day after Surat court convicted him in a 2019 defamation case, Rahul Gandhi was also disqualified from the Lok Sabha which means he will not be able to contest elections for 8 years unless a high court stays the conviction. Due to this, a Sankalp Satyagraha was held by the congress leaders and after that all the Congress

MPs and MLA's had attended the parliament and state assemblies wearing black clothes. However, court has suspended the sentence for 30 days for further appeal.

Cartoon 10

Signifier:

This cartoon is drawn by the cartoonist Ajit Ninan and was published on 25 March, 2023 in the "Times of India (TOI)" newspaper. A man with the symbol of hand is portrayed in a bent or falling position as he is attacked by boomerang toy which are labelled with different words like surname, jail, and cronies.

Signified:

Background: Parliament is drawn in the background which has people and a leader resembles to Narendra Modi is drawn. This indicates the disqualification of Rahul from the parliament.

Object: A Boomerang with name on it, is the main object of the cartoon. Three boomerangs are drawn which symbolize the convictions and punishment of Rahul Gandhi by attacking him. **Character:** Rahul Gandhi is portrayed with the t-shirt holding the symbol of hand that depicts the Congress party and is shown dizzy due to the constant attacks of boomerangs. **Text:** It is a non – textual cartoon but consists of labelling as well as the caption "Boomerang" which conveys constant attacks by boomerang as defamation case. **Lexicon of Cartoon:**

Hites: It is drawn around the boomerang which indicates the speed and movement of a boomerang.

Agitrons: It is used around the body of Rahul Gandhi to show the falling movement due to dizziness.

Sphericasia: It is drawn above the character to depict the circular movement of the action of attack taking place in the cartoon.

Core meaning: The defamation case is portrayed where Rahul Gandhi is attacked by the boomerang of surname, jail, and cronies representing the convictions and punishment sentenced by the court. It also portrays the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi from parliament as it is drawn in the background and Rahul is also shown outside of it.

CONCLUSION

Cartooning is an art of expression through which a message can be communicated in a humorous and satirical way. It is an art which can be created and not meant to be copied. Every cartoonist has its style of portraying cartoons to represent the issue. It is the power of a cartoonist through which he/she can portray even a negative situation or issue without insulting any authority and hurting someone's sentiments.

The present study concludes that the cartoons hold a special place in the newspaper. The frequency of cartoons and level of issues on which the cartoons were portrayed suggests that be it an international issue a national level or a regional level issue it can be conveyed beautifully in a satirical way through the irreplaceable form of communication – cartoon.

It is also found that understanding, contextual knowledge and knowledge of historical background of issue is very much essential to understand the art of cartooning. It is also very important to have knowledge of various elements of the cartooning to understand the hidden message of cartoon.

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