



Editorial Cartoons and Current Political Situation: A Content Analysis of Cartoons

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ABSTRACT

Media, especially visual media, can strongly influence society's perceptions, opinions, and views. Editorial cartoons, a notable aspect of newspapers and magazines, not only reflect changes in public opinions but also the discourse surrounding a particular issue. This study evaluated the current political scenario of Pakistan by analyzing daily cartoons published by Dawn and The News International. This study employed a qualitative research approach and the content analysis as a research design. The researcher gathered and analyzed more than 200 editorial cartoons from both dailies. The researcher segmented the cartoons based on the issues they portrayed and found that both dailies lacked sufficient focus on contemporary societal issues, focusing primarily on political parties or the nation's economic situation. The study offered appropriate recommendations for both cartoon creators and readers. This research concludes that The News International depicts the effects of the nation's political landscape on the public, intra-party relations, and constructing a figurehead for blame. In contrast, Dawn's criticisms and depictions align with the dominant social zeitgeist. Both dailies lack in their portrayal of social issues and subject matter outside of political figureheads.

Keywords: Dawn, The News International, editorial cartoons, political scenario, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Media, within the context of the Twenty-First Century, performs the role of dissipating remarkable amounts of information on a global scale. As such, it plays an important role in terms of not only constructing political personalities and figures' identities but also in constructing the identity of countries. Through its history, much of the media disseminated in Pakistan had focused on analyzing the role of the political parties therein. However, recent years have seen an overall decline in this regard with a



greater focus placed on contemporary social issues. Political cartoons, the purpose of which is to offer a reflection, if not analysis, on contemporary politics, continue to fill this role.

Editorial Cartoons

In its form as cartoons, disseminated through offline or online newspapers, social media posts, blogs, or on websites, media not only offers a form of entertainment but also reaffirms political affiliations and beliefs. As such, political cartoons can be considered to be responsible for representing circumstances, situations, countries, people, and so on. In their study, Shaikh, Tariq & Saqlain (2019) had examined political cartoons published in between 1947 to 2020 in Pakistan. Through this, they were able to find that these cartoons generally represent the period that they were produced in and often an overall political perception of said period. As such, these cartoons' function roles apart from politics and humor – they act as records of historical situations and events thereby providing a critical lens through which said situations and events can be viewed and understood.

Political cartoons are caricature that exaggerate personal characteristics in order to portray political figures in a humorous light. They are popular because they address a problem directly. An editorial cartoon uses only a drawing, image, etc. to convey ideas and information, whilst a typical article published in a paper uses hundreds of words in attempting to convey the same density of information (Ashfaq & Shami, 2020). The role of editorial cartoons in public communication is not always accredited as significant by the viewer as cartoons are linked with satire, comics and entertainment. As a result, they are frequently overlooked as a mean of political communication. On the contrary, they play an important role in political communication and public opinion formation.

The current research aims to analyze the current political situation of Pakistan through the editorial cartoons of two leading English dailies.



Research Objective

The research objectives of the study are:

- To analyze the political themes and topics covered in the editorial cartoons.
- To examine the different perspectives and opinions presented in editorial cartoons, including those of the ruling government, opposition parties, and civil society.

Research Question

This research seeks to answer following question:

RQ1-What are the most common themes and topics tackled in editorial cartoons?

RQ2-To what extent do editorial cartoons depict current political situation of Pakistan?

Limitation of the Study

This research is limited to only two newspapers. These included that of The News International and Dawn. This was done so due to the fact that these are two of Pakistan's most prominent newspapers and thus transmit to the largest portion of the nation's population. As such, further research should then focus on expanding on the sample selection used by the current work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Onserio & Ondieki (2017) editorial cartoons and the time at which they are made public help in understanding the possible biases that their authors may wish to bring about amid their readers. Specifically, Carl (1970) regard editorial cartoons to be akin to any other pictorial form and thus a number of assumptions exist in the reader when viewing said cartoon. These can range from being politically polarized to



being neutral to the depiction. Overall, however, cartoons are often overlooked as a means of communicating important political information and swaying sides in any given political landscape (Walker, 2003).

Nonetheless, the political nature and use of these cartoons as instruments to convey a narrative that abides by the political climate remains. Connors (1998) were able to find that the newspaper cartoons during the Persian Gulf crisis often represented Hussein in a negative manner such as him as a criminal, an aggressor, or as an animal to dehumanize him. Conversely, the Bush Administration was also portrayed in a negative and impatient manner as well. Although Hussein was portrayed as an enemy in the war, Bush was not portrayed as a hero.

Often cartoons explore public perception through specific concerns, emotional responses, and social status associations (Matheson, Plangger, Kietzmann, Vella, & Grant, 2019). Zurbriggen & Vallerga (2022) were able to show that women were portrayed in a highly negative manner in American cartoons, often portrayed as violent with concerns mainly on their race, age, and gender. Even during the 2008 elections, the majority of cartoons portrayed female candidates in a less favorable light than their male contemporaries (Zurbriggen & Sherman, 2010).

Political cartoons in Pakistan, then, have been shown to abide by a healthy practice of criticizing intolerance, social evils, etc. (Ghilzai & BAJWA, 2020). Similarly, in evaluating the link between Aines' cartoons and utterances in Jakarta, Hasanah & Hidayat (2020) found that the best way to analyze such was through categorizing them based on typology, symbols, and icons. Cartoons were found to be an interesting way to depict political messages as they ease the reader in understanding the meaning whilst reducing their aversion to potentially controversial opinions (Hasanah & Hidayat, 2020).

RESEARCH METHOD



This study employed a qualitative research approach. Data collection was drawn from primary source which involved collection of editorial cartoons from The News International and Dawn daily newspapers in line with the aims of the study. The writer conducted this study using content analysis method because it is related to interpretation and description in the editorial cartoons. Content analysis (categorization of cartoons and captions; headlines and their contents) after which all editorial cartoons were allotted labels and later on matched as per their themes in line with the objectives of the study. Special attention was conjointly drawn on their role in current political scenario. Because of the accessibility of data for analysis, the design was appropriate.

This study focused on 336 editorial cartoons. 180 from Dawn and 156 from The News International for 6 months which are 1st January 2022 to 30th June 2022. The difference in number of cartoons is because The News International newspaper did not print editorial cartoons on Sundays.

Methods of Data Analysis

The researcher has used the qualitative research method. All the minor and major findings of data is taken into consideration and then key evaluations is carried out. The analysis of the data is done on the basis of research questions that are the main focus of the research. The writer used Content analysis to evaluate the editorial cartoons. And made categories out of their captions, content and headings. After which all editorial cartoons were allotted titles and subtitles and then issues were evaluated out of them in line with the objectives of the study. There are many different analytical frameworks that researchers used to guide the interpretation of their qualitative data. In order to thoroughly evaluate the cartoons, the researcher had segmented them into folders based on their month of publication. Herein, both Dawn and The News International were allocated six subfolders each. The cartoons located therein then had their titles written, manually, into a Microsoft Excel file. These titles had their dates corroborated for the assessment on the bases of their time of publication. Following this, the cartoons were



evaluated based on the parameters set by the researcher. There were 17 issues highlighted during the assessment.

The researcher's data analysis approach is based on the efforts of previously published studies (Zurbriggen & Vallerga, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

The researcher has chosen "Agenda Setting Theory" for the theoretical background of this study. Agenda Setting Theory was introduced first in 1972 by McCombs and Shaw (as cited by Onserio & Ondieki (2017)) and considers that mass media helps establish agendas and reasons for people to care about them. An example of this would be how, without the news media actively mentioning it, it is very likely that few would be aware of political elections taking place within their city and thus would not place importance on their outcome. By mentioning them and emphasizing their significance, news media is able to convey an agenda of significance to the public. The current work used Agenda Setting Theory as its basis in order to offer theoretical insight concerning the manner in which editorial cartoons depict political problems and situations in newspapers as a means of establishing a political agenda to form belief and reorient the public within Pakistan's socio-political and economic context. Agenda Setting Theory is amid the many media effect theories that the researcher considers crucial for the current work as it accounts for the link between the public and media while helping explain the overall objectives and outcomes of editorial cartoons. In of itself, agenda-setting is considered as, most primarily news media's, ability to impact the significance given to subjects within the paradigm of public discourse (Matusitz & Ochoa, 2018).

The dominant perception remained that of a disliking for political figures, which then shows that television, similar to other forms of media, ends up reinforcing if not establishing a set perception in the minds of the general public. The below figure shows a graphical illustration of agenda setting.

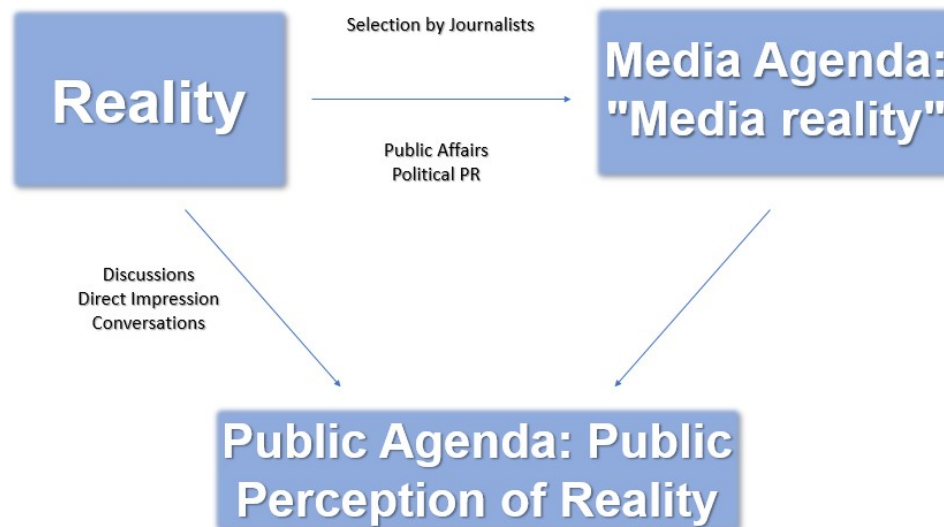


Figure 1: Agenda Setting Theory

Research making use of this theory, as illustrated by prior works, has to focus on describing the ways through which media influences audiences and establishes a new prevalence hierarchy. Countries that have a higher amount of political power, on the global stage, tend to attain a higher amount of media exposure and as such agenda-setting, through media, is considered to be led by the bias of said media based on culture, economy, politics, and so on (Khan, 2018).

DATA ANALYSIS

Before much can be discussed about the results of the current work, the below table should be taken into consideration. Effectively, the table illustrates the overall number of editorial cartoons that were collected from Dawn and the total issues found therein. In this regard, it can be seen that a grand total of ninety-eight (98) issues were found with the most prominent being that of Economy totaling twenty-five (25) counts. The second most prominent issue was that of “No Trust Motion” with twelve counts (12), PTI Long March with eleven counts, and so on.



Table 1: Political Cartoon of Dawn Newspaper

Subjects for political cartoons Dawn	Code Name	Count
Allies of PDM	AP -1	7
Armed Forces	AF-1	1
Conspiracy	CN-1	9
Economy	EC-1	25
Election Commission of Pakistan	ECP-1	2
Federal Bureau of Revenue	FBR-1	1
Federal Government	FG-1	4
Foreign Funding Case	FFC-1	4
Intra Party Politics	IPP-1	3
National Accountability Bureau	NAB-1	2
No Trust Move	NTM-1	12
Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act	PECA-1	3
Pakistan Democratic Party March	PDM-1	0
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Long March	PTI-1	11
Punjab Assembly	PA-1	6
Supreme Court	SC-1	7
Social Issues	SI-1	1
Grand Total		98

Table 2 then shows the total issue count for The NEWS International. In this regard, the issue of economy was considered to be prominent by twofold when compared to the prior. Whilst this issue had appeared twenty-five times in Dawn's newspapers, it had appeared fifty-six times in The NEWS International's. The total number of issues found were also found to be higher than that of the ones found within Dawn's at a total of one hundred and thirty-three. The second most prominent then included that of the No Trust Motion and Allies of PDM.



Table 2: Political Cartoon of The NEWS International Newspaper

Subject of the Political Cartoon of The NEWS International Newspaper	Code Name	Count
Allies of the PDM	AP-2	11
Armed Forces	AF-2	0
Conspiracy	CN-2	7
Economy	EC-2	56
Election Commission of Pakistan	ECP-2	1
Federal Bureau of Revenue	FBR-2	0
Federal Government	FG-2	6
Foreign Funding Case	FFC-2	6
Intra Party Politics	IPP-2	1
National Accountability Bureau	NAB-2	4
No Trust Move	NTM-2	17
Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act	PECA-2	4
Pakistan Democratic Party March	PDM-2	2
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Long March	PTI-2	9
Punjab Assembly	PA-2	7
Supreme Court	SC-2	3
Social Issues	SI-2	1
Grand Total		133

Although Dawn had made the majority of their content readily available on their website as well as through libraries, The News International was unable to do so. Specifically, the latter's website had only traced back to the month of September 2022, with regard to news articles. To curb this limitation then the researcher had sought out real world newspapers from a range of different libraries within Islamabad/Rawalpindi. However, these were also not complete editions with a number of dates missed. Whether this was due to publishing complications or the lack thereof availability of them is uncertain.

Among one of the interesting aspects depicted in the editorial cartoons is that of the manner in which states are personified. Specifically, small and developing states such as Pakistan are often depicted as either weak and frail figures or as cartoonish-ill patients. Zahoor, the artist primarily contributing to the works shown in Dawn's editorials, over the course of the timeline of the study, seems to predominantly use charcoal coloring with a key focus on curved lines for the form of the characters depicted therein. The



below subsection is then segmented based on the issues presented within Dawn's publications and those presented within the publications of The News International.

Dawn

Allies

The first issue then covered under this analysis is that of Allies. With regard to this issue, the researcher was able to find a total of seven (7) editorial cartoons. In this context, many depictions from early January to late March focused on either reducing the size of the opposition to reduce their stature, emphasized on the possibility of the government remaining in place thereby deterring the hopes of the opposition's supporters, or on the dependence of the opposition's coalition on the IMF. By late June, however, depictions had worsened to illustrate the coalition and thus Allies' breakdown following the No-Confidence Voting.



Figure 2: Allies - Dawn

Conspiracy

The third issue then highlighted was that of Conspiracy. In total, nine instances of this issue were found. These showed either Imran Khan being alone in his fight against



the opposition; a satirical depiction of “The Letter” wherein the US essentially writes a Dear John to the former Prime Minister; Imran Khan decrying his removal from office wherein Nawaz Sharif interrupts him and claims that he is stealing his lines; and multiple instances of Imran Khan claiming his successor to be the outcome of foreign manipulation and his successor claiming Khan to be concocted by local manipulation. Overall, the cartoons then make light of the consideration of a potential conspiracy whilst also depicting the coalition as winning office through a collective effort wherein Khan was left out.



Figure 3: Conspiracy - Dawn

Economy

The most prominent issue found was in relation to the economy. In this regard, whilst a notable amount of the depictions had focused on economy turmoil and the effects of exchange rate fluctuations on the working and lower-class in Pakistan, a number of others emphasized the role of the government and the opposition with relation to the economy. For example, one such depiction by Zahoor showed the government figure extending an olive branch, held between their teeth, to tied and bound Shehbaz Sharif, whilst holding a baton behind themselves. Moreover, the majority of the depictions of Pakistan’s economy illustrate it as either being a skeleton, a broken airplane nosediving to the ground, or as a weak frail man.



Figure 4: Economy - Dawn - 1

For example, in mid-January, the government's announcement of the growth rate increasing to five per cent is illustrated as a man measuring a skeleton's height. Furthermore, the greater issue of economy was also used to cover a wide range of issues such as Pakistan's continued ascend on the corruption index, active increases in the price of fossil fuels, load-shedding, and taxation. Continually, across the six-month period, the government as well as the opposition, are illustrated as adversarial forces such as them stepping on silhouettes of the general public; blindly balancing payments whilst on a tight-rope; sitting happily on the husk of a figure labeled as the economy; or their struggles to repay the IMF. Much of the depictions of the then Finance Minister, Miftah Ismail, either consider him as using petrol prices to rob the public, place the greater burden of the economy on the public, or attempt to inject life into the economy through fuel and power hikes.



Figure 5: Economy - Dawn - 2

Lastly, the IMF remains a prominent figure across depictions that fall into this issue, given the high amount of debt that the state owes the fund.

Election Commission of Pakistan

The issue of ECP, or Election Commission of Pakistan, was barely mentioned twice throughout the course of the six-month period. The first depiction then emphasized Dar's restoration as senator and the second involved a depiction of the President, Arif Alvi, crossing out the Election Reform Bill, whilst declaring it to be retrogressive. Such depictions explicitly leave a great deal of room for commentary and seem to be published

Federal Board of Revenue of Pakistan

The issue of FBR was found to only coincide with a single instance similar to that of the Armed Forces issue. This was then in the form of a depiction wherein the Federal Board of Revenue of Pakistan holds a weapon labeled "TAXES" towards what can be considered as business owner with Shaukat Tarin, former Finance Minister, stands behind the FBR and put their finger in a manner imitating a weapon. The implication then is that



the FBR was holding the public hostage through taxes and that Tarin was holding the FBR hostage through deceitful tactics.

Federal Government

The issue of Federal Government was found to coincide with four cartoons. These offered depictions wherein either the government and opposition, in the form of vehicle drivers, had collided and were arguing whilst the Supreme Courts ignored them; illustrated Nawaz Sharif as hiding under his passport; depicted the PML-N (Nawaz and Shehbaz Sharif's political party) persona as being covered with issues ranging from governance and the economy to poverty and terrorism; or the government as Humpty Dumpty with a crack. Overall, the collective image communicated throughout was that of a government exhausted by various contemporary issues, be they social, political, or economic.

Foreign Funding Case

Illustrations in relation to Foreign Funding demonstrate a lack thereof consensus with regard to the subject. Whilst the first of such instances considers scrutiny of Khan's party as being a type of self-assessment gesture, others depictions show it as being a plot constructed by the opposition. Whilst this was an issue that had remained prominent throughout the period before and after the No-Confidence Vote, depictions of it are scarce if not lacking in terms of the commentary provided.

National Accountability Bureau

Depictions provided by Dawn in relation to NAB, the National Accountability Bureau, had focused less so on the institution itself and more so on the efforts made regarding it and involving it. These primarily illustrated the Affidavit Case as being a means of striking against Shehbaz Sharif; Khan actively making use of different political figures, in the form of Shahzad Akbar and Musaddiq Abbasi to initiate efforts toward



accountability; and the effects of PTI's ordinance on NAB as an institution. Specifically, such depictions then illustrate NAB as being more so of an instrument of the government and less so as an individualized national institution held toward accountability and transparency efforts.

No Trust Motion

As highlighted previously, the No Trust Motion was the second most prominent issue featured within Dawn's cartoons. This involved depictions of what was considered to be the aforementioned coalition preparing means toward inciting a No-Confidence Motion as well as the impact that a collective effort toward removing Khan would have.



Figure 6: No Trust Motion - Dawn - 1

Whilst the first few months of the year, much of such depictions had leaned toward being against the opposition and the possibility of a No-Trust Motion.



Figure 7: No Trust Motion – Dawn - 2

However, by the month of April these depictions had shifted sides and moved toward considering the efforts of Khan as being inadequate. An example of this would be how April saw depictions wherein Khan and Alvi stand atop a broken National Assembly. Furthermore, the depictions that followed also considered Shehbaz Sharif and Khan playing cricket wherein Sharif moves the equipment away from Khan as well as Sharif utilizing a military weapon to launch Article 6 (high treason) toward Khan.

Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act

The PECA Act of 2022 was considered to be a landmark act that, should it have been passed, would have severely limited freedom of speech on both social media and in the public press. Given the source material in discussion here, then, all depictions of PECA paint it as being against fundamental human rights, such as in the form of an axe, in the form of Dracula, and as a stone.

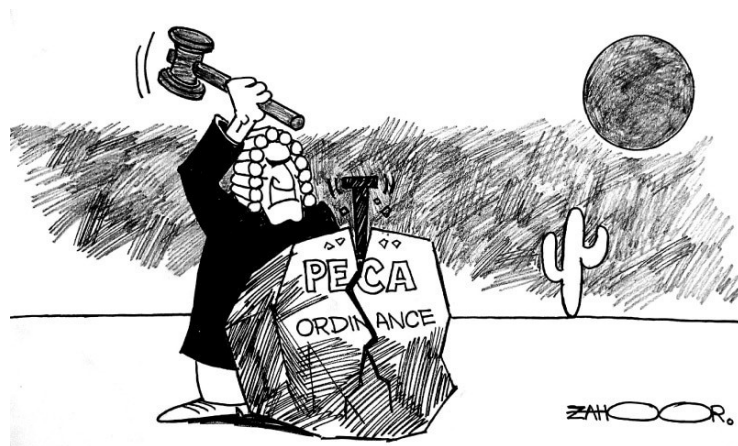


Figure 8: Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act – Dawn

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Long March

The PTI Long March was the third most prominent issue and a total of eleven depictions of it were found across the six-month period. In this regard, these had illustrated Khan as being a knight in shining armor at the start but had quickly turned toward illustrating his failings in terms of governance. This took the form of the below wherein it can be seen that Khan's actual Naya Pakistan (New Pakistan) does not meet the advertised version.

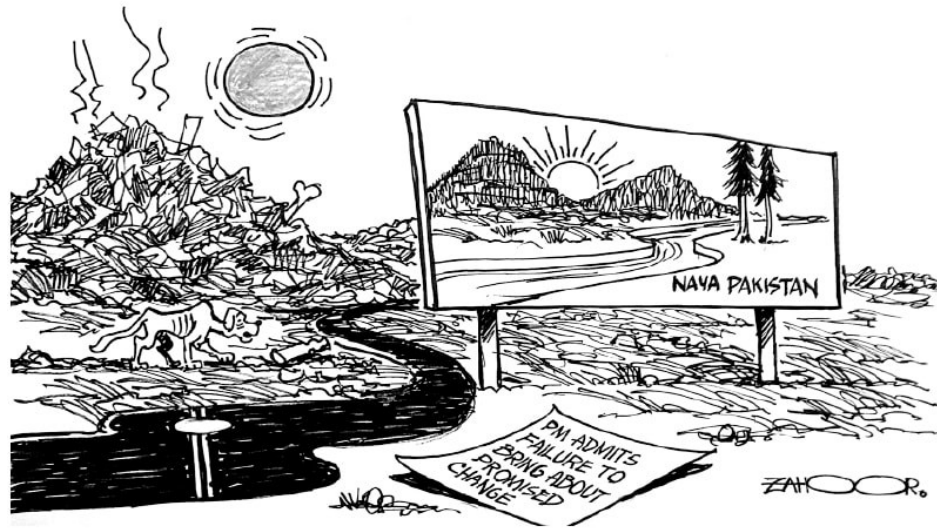


Figure 9: Naya Pakistan – Dawn

This criticism continued in the months to follow with depictions showing Khan as constructing his own statue with the headline “Aim to make Pakistanis one nation”. This issue also involved illustrations of the effects of foreign politics on the local government with Khan depicted as a child being carried away from Uncle Sam by Putin thereby illustrating the differences in influence and size between Pakistan and the West. Following the No-Confidence Vote, these depictions furthered on their criticism of Khan with him being depicted as continually marching toward Islamabad but not being able to reach it; Khan’s transportation being broken down; and Khan making use of a broken canon to launch himself toward the capital.



Figure 10: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Long March – Dawn

This issue also held depictions of the Interior Minister, Rana Sanaullah as being an individual lacking sufficient power; and the opposition as lacking sufficient competence.

Punjab Assembly

Depictions of the Punjab Assembly involved a ranging number of topics being discussed. These included that of PML-Q's efforts toward local government elections; Buzdar losing his chief minister seat in Punjab whilst being depicted as a weeping child; Hamza Shahbaz and Pervez Elahi fighting as roosters; the lack of power dissemination between the federal and local government during the Sharif administration, and so on.

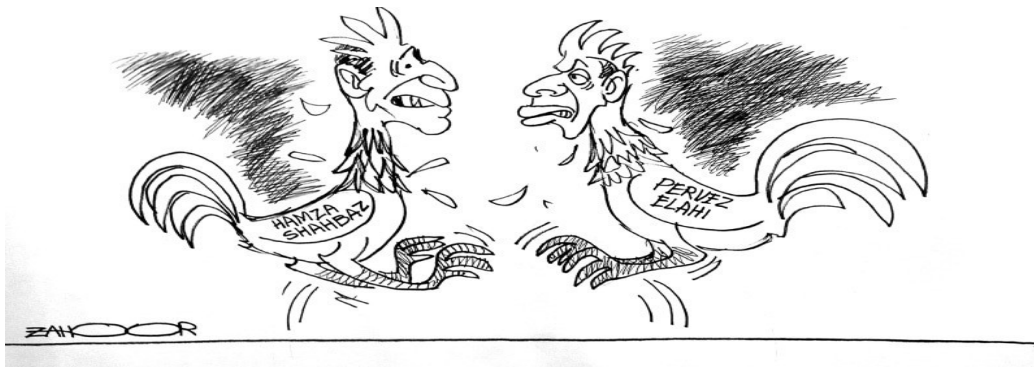




Figure 11: Punjab Assembly - Dawn

The News International

Allies

In total, eleven works were found that had fallen into the issue of Allies. These depictions within The News' publications had focused on various different political parties ranging from the PPP to PDM, from MQMP to PTI and JUIF. These depictions emphasized confrontations between parties rather than their agreements with one another.

Conspiracy

This issue had covered eleven different works published throughout the time period for the study. The works that had fallen within this issue focused on how the government and opposition actively engaged in direct competition based on the constitution; the word conspiracy not being in an NSC statement; Khan saying that he is well aware of those conducting the conspiracy but is shown as being unaware of it; the government assigning a commission to make Khan resign, and so on.



Figure 12: Conspiracy - The News International – 1



Figure 13: Conspiracy - The News International – 2



Overall, the depictions herein offer a highly critical as well as negative perspective of Khan. The agenda then communicated is that of Khan's inadequacy with regard to leadership as well as direct criticisms of the conspiracy brought up by the former Prime Minister.

Economy

Similar to the many different subjects covered under this broader issue of economy within the prior section, the issue of economy, with regard to The News International, included various different subjects such as increases in petrol and diesel pricing; tax hikes; effects of the withholding tax on the public; the IMF, and so on.



Figure 14: Economy - The News International - 1

Fifty-six of the one hundred and thirty-three works included had fall into this issue. Predominantly, these highlighted increases in the price for commodities such as natural gas and electricity; the impact of inflation on the nation; the role of corruption with regard to the nation's contemporary condition; loadshedding; and the effects of such debt on the general public.

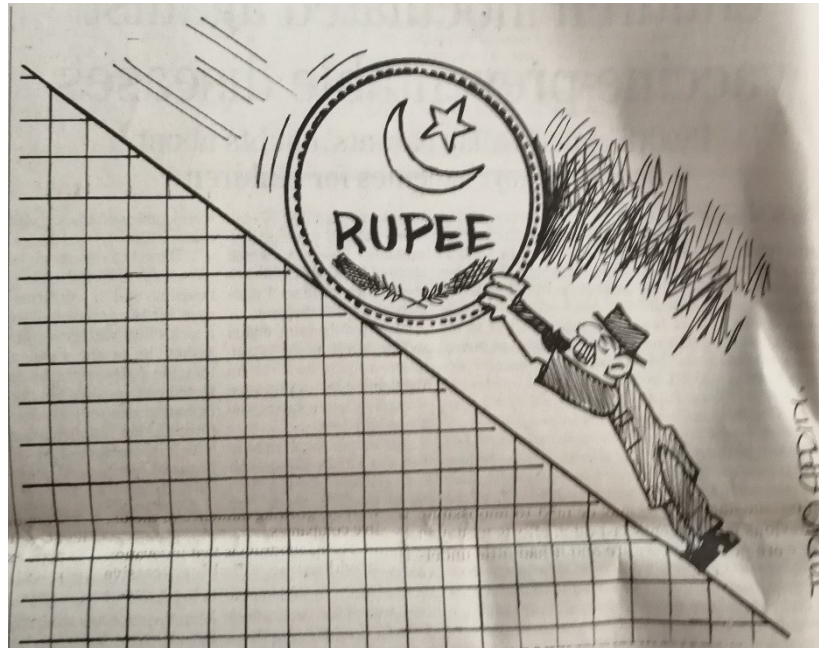


Figure 15: Economy - The News International - 2

Given the fact that the year 2020 had seen the Pandemic and thus a recession take hold of the global economy, such depictions align with contemporary global trends (Barker, 2016). The depiction then communicated throughout the six-month period is that of a devaluing rupee as well as inadequacy from both the government and opposition during this time in mitigating the negative effects of external economic factors. Continued reliance on the IMF is painted as a negative in that it has actively increased Pakistan's overall debt and thus hindered efforts toward increasing the value of the rupee.

Election Commission of Pakistan

Only a single work was found that had fit into the issue of ECP. This work illustrated the ECP as beginning its investigation into the foreign funding case. This depiction shows the ECP as a large figure with a magnifying glass held toward an Iman Khan holding a sack behind himself labelled "Foreign Funding". This then adds further to the trend illustrated previously wherein Khan is continually depicted by The News International as a conniving figure.



Federal Government

Six works fell under this them. These, primarily, had focused on discussing the presidential system of Pakistan; attempting to direct the attention of the government toward the issues that the public faces; elaborate on the lack of focus from both the opposition and the government on the general public; and the challenges that Shehbaz Sharif's government is likely to face thereby complicating its ability to remain in office for the foreseeable future.

Foreign Funding Case

The subject of foreign funding yielded a great deal of works that had, as was the case with the prior, been against Khan. With regard to this matter, The News International had illustrated Khan as being in possession of fifty-three bank accounts and hiding them whilst attempting to label the opposition as colluding with foreign actors as well as of hiding funds in foreign states. Accordingly, January also saw the daily depicting two hands, detached from their respective figures, exchanging funding under the umbrella of donations. Depictions of other political parties, in this context, were scarce with the majority of such depictions being focused on Khan, specifically.

National Accountability Bureau

The issue of NAB had included four different cartoons across the six-month period. Herein, the most prominent was that of Khan being seen taking a U-Turn when the path ahead of him was labeled as "corruption". This then affirms that whilst The News International had actively criticized Khan's failings and statements across the time period, the daily did acknowledge his efforts as well. Another depicts NAB as an individual with a landing net with a quote stating that "Dissolve NAB and hold its employees accountable". NAB's depiction, herein, then focuses less so on the efforts, achievements, and failings of the institution itself but rather the discussions surrounding it and its role within Pakistan's political landscape.



No Trust Motion

Seventeen works fell under this issue. These primarily emphasizes a number of different viewpoints. One of the more so prominent was that of the Constitution of Pakistan bleeding as an outcome of the decisions made by the political parties therein. Apart from this, the depictions showed local political figures as considering the no-trust/no-confidence motion being orchestrated by foreign powers; the direct effects of the no-trust motion on the general public; and the fate of each party following the motion.



Figure 16: No Trust Motion - The News International

Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act

Four total depictions of the PECA Act were found. These illustrated PECA as being an offense toward local laws; the effects that PECA, should it have been passed, would have on the freedom of speech; Alvi amending ordinances to amend PECA, how the implementation of PECA would destroy transparency in the media, and so on.



Figure 17: Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act - The News International

Pakistan Democratic Movement March

The Pakistan Democratic Movement's march was considered as a long march by The News International. However, seldom a criticism is drawn concerning the party or its political objectives, rather The News International focuses its commentary on reiterating statements made by other political figures with regard to the matter.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Long March

Depictions of the PTI's Long March, which was a response to the No-Confidence Vote, are more so favorable of Khan than depictions were during his time in government. Specifically, these depictions show social media, as a whole, following Khan on his march; the Supreme Court allowing Khan's second long march; and Khan being on the road, partaking in the long march.



Figure 18: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Long March - The News International

Punjab Assembly

Seven total works had met this issue and were thus included in the current work. These had focused on elaborating on how Sardar Usman Ahmad Khan Buzdar had lost his position as Punjab's Chief Minister; the different candidates likely to take the position; competition between Hamza Shahbaz and Pervez Elahi; the Punjab by polls; and efforts of Khan with regard to the Punjab by polls.



Figure 19: Punjab Assembly - The News International



Comparison

With the previously highlighted upon findings in mind, it should then be understood that, overall, these two English dailies, in spite of focusing on the same subjects, have published considerably different interpretations of them as well as in differing quantities. Whereas The News International takes a more so critical view with regard to political figures and focuses explicitly on the effects of the political scenario in Pakistan on the general public, Dawn instead choses to highlight changes in the political landscape and satirize contemporary events. The below table also highlights the ranging difference in terms of quantity of content published by both newspapers.

Table 3: Comparison of Dawn and The News International

Subject of the Cartoons published	Dawn	The News International
Allies of PDM	7	11
Armed Forces	1	0
Conspiracy	9	7
Economy	25	56
Election Commission of Pakistan	2	1
Federal Bureau of Revenue	1	0
Federal Government	4	6
Foreign Funding Case	4	6
Intra Party Politics	3	1
National Accountability Bureau	2	4
No Trust Motion	12	17
Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act	3	4
Pakistan Democratic Party March	0	2
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Long March	11	9
Punjab Assembly	6	7



Supreme Court	7	3
Social Issues	1	1
Grand Total	98	133

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As it stands, the researcher had evaluated multiple cartoons and included a total of two hundred and thirty-six into their analysis. The focus herein was that of assessing the extent to which Pakistan's current situation was depicted by two of the nation's leading English daily newspapers. In conclusion, then, it can be stated that daily cartoons published by two of Pakistan's leading English newspapers offer highly different views and perspectives with regard to Pakistan's current political scenario. Whilst these two did align in a number of ways with regard to their depiction of the economy and the competition between the government and the opposition, their communication on the political situation in the nation was highly dissimilar. For example, Dawn's views and communication often emphasized the formation of a coalition to push Khan out of government and had changed the manner in which it depicted Khan as public opinion changed. The News International, on the other hand, continually offered a negative depiction of Khan prior to and following the No-Confidence Vote. Moreover, intra party politics and relations are illustrated continued efforts toward undermining the other party in The News International's works. For Dawn, this is the case in a handful of publications. Additionally, the researcher was also able to find that Pakistan's economic situation is continually viewed as the outcome of local political decisions by The News International whilst for Dawn the blame is not placed on a singular party. Despite the many issues that the researcher was able to find, one aspect remained prominent throughout the majority of the works published by The News International, that of a direct criticism of Khan as a political figure.



Additionally, the researcher was able to find less so favorable depictions from both dailies regarding many of the nation's institutions such as NAB. In particular, these depictions focused not so on the failings or achievements of said institutions but rather on how they could be utilized by the political parties in place. This was by far the case with many of the subjects not related directly to the parties themselves, such as, for example, when the IMF or foreign governments were brought into discussion as well as when the economy and local issues were illustrated.

With regard to the research objective, then, the researcher was able to conclude that the current political scenario of Pakistan is depicted as one continually facing challenges and difficulties by The News International. This same situation is communicated as a complicated one involving the interrelations of various parties by Dawn. With regard to the research question set for the current work, the researcher was able to conclude that editorial cartoons in Pakistan primarily focus on the economic issues, issues related to political figures, and changes in the political situation. Important aspects such as social issues, the role of local institutions, and subjects that are actively discussed by the general public are not thoroughly highlighted or discussed in these dailies. In this context, these editorial cartoons end up neglecting an important aspect of Pakistan's political situation and instead focus on cherry-picking their communication to be limited to a few issues.

Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher would advise the use of a qualitative approach wherein the researcher makes use of interviews with cartoonists and local newspaper workers to assess the reasons for the lack of such depictions. Primarily, the fact that such depictions are actively neglected may be due to a set or number of reasons and thus evaluating such at their source would be adequate.

Furthermore, further research should focus on making use of quantitative efforts to conduct a comparison between local cartoons and foreign ones to assess the presence



and usage of issues therein. The goal should be to evaluate the types of issues illustrated by both as well as assess the ideas communicated by such cartoons.



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1 APPENDICES

1.1 Appendix A

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/
1eOtLtaF05DcHdfnmRaJggenB5tKx0fwI?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1eOtLtaF05DcHdfnmRaJggenB5tKx0fwI?usp=sharing)

1.2 Appendix B

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/
1UYsMdj1biKyCSW_Pg9iezhmwJ4MKMKzr?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UYsMdj1biKyCSW_Pg9iezhmwJ4MKMKzr?usp=sharing)