Original Researcher Article

Symbols, Satire, and the State: A Semiotic Analysis of Political Cartoons in Indian English E-Newspapers

Abin Gevarghese Panicker[1] , Dr. Anamika Srivastava[2]

[1] Amity University Mumbai, Amity School of Communication (ASCO), Mumbai, Pune Expressway, Bhatan, Post – Somathne, Panvel, Mumbai. Maharashtra – 410206, India.
Email ID : abin.panicker@s.amity.edu

[2] [1] Amity University Mumbai, Amity School of Communication (ASCO), Mumbai, Pune Expressway, Bhatan, Post – Somathne, Panvel, Mumbai. Maharashtra – 410206, India.
Email ID : asrivastava@mum.amity.edu

ABSTRACT

Indeed, political cartoons remain a on of the forms of journalism that forces political figures and events into comparatively short and laconically depressing symbolic, satirical and other culturally rich visual forms telling stories, spreading satire. In the fast expanding digital news world in the country, the English language electronic newspapers and their cartoons seem to travel the worlder,b more frequently and with less restraint, and even the tradition of visual argument plays critical role in influencing public opinion. In the current research, a focused argument will be built on the representation of sociopolitical values notably that political messages, and yet a different approah will be applied in researching the English political cartoons in e-newspapersin India by applying a thematic synthesis analysis and adoptingqualitative semiotic framework. A certain number of e-newspapers and cartoons from this media that were published during the campaigns were reviewed in terms of their denotative and connotative meanings in order to identify consistent symbols, satirical devices and patterns more concerned with certain political figures, entities and the relations between the state, political figures and the citizens. Most of the cartoons contain messages on governance and leadrshp, using much written language in comics that include institutions, national elements, structures, animals and persons which reveal their goals. Satire is expressed mainly through incongruity and distortion, which allows the cartoon to criticize what isplugged by the politicians as opposed to what is. Also, the research also finds an imbalance in representation: where single leaders are turned into cartoons and juudgeed by moral criteria, while institutions are not characterized through single cartoons but in general and in the end — they depict how clearly the problem and the liability are represented. Lastly, the establishments of modern political cartoons/teksts/contexts (here or not) maximise the level of symbolic aggression and free dependence on printed texts, consequently increasing both effectiveness of persuasion and complexity of comprehension when seeing the cartoons that have already left their original limits in self-presentation. This research provides insight into the use of visual symbols in communication and media semiotics through the case of cartoons as objects through which meaning and power struggles are carried out in a controversy over who holds power and the concept of a free society

Keywords: Political cartoons; Semiotics; Visual satire; Digital journalism; Indian e-newspapers

1. INTRODUCTION:

Cartoons in politics have been writing a rich and interesting chapter in the history of political communication, interweaving with the problems of journalism, satire and visual language. Contrary to the linear narrative news, political cartoons would be able to catch the essence of the most intricate situations using symbols, metaphors and usual light jokes intended for criticism, resistance, and mobilization in the repressive communicative spaces [19],[9]. In these environments, such as e-newspaper political cartoons, have started playing a contributory role as instantaneous commentaries in debates about politicians, policies, political leaders, accountability and governance without much caution. This study portrays political cartoons as semiological texts that give meaning to ideology and conflict relationships between the state, the media and the people.

Unlike other countries, Indians have inherited their political cartoon tradition from the colonial past. Moreover, how the press enjoys freedom of expression, democracy since India became independent and how news is delivered have all shaped the role of political cartoons in India. Historically, Indian cartoonists have used satire to criticize the government in power, while being mindful of the prevalence of censorship, legal challenges, and the changes in the boundary between the public and private spheres that are brought about by such amendment [13], [18]. Instead of reflecting the country's political culture and the values upon which it prides itself, the cartoons instead position themselves in a space that primarily serves as a conduit for political change [9]. Especially with the digitalisation of newspapers, cartoons have come

out of the boundaries of a printed newspaper and gone on to online newspapers, news websites, where they can be accessed and shared through social media or other internet technology, therefore achieving more influence and importance in the public and in politics [1],[8].

1.1 Visual Political Communication: Political Cartoons

It is irrefutable that the use of political cartoons can be understood as a form of visual political communication and is marked by exaggeration, caricature and language symbols of various short forms of physical actions. That is how political cartoons go about setting the stage for political disputes and actors' evaluation. This is more because political cartoons help in resolving complex poutical disagreements through easily understandable figurative expressions which further incentivizes the viewers in understanding the political matters or subjects [3]. Moreover, such framing capabilities make the argumentative cartoons one of the most suitable instruments for regulating the need to respect the set agenda, as well as for making certain conclusions about the particular situations (Viswanath & Morgan, 2007).

The analysis of political cartoons and other visual forms has named Theory of Semiotics, based on the concept of signs and their relevance in graphic texts ad their reading in context. In emphasising the possibilities in political humor, he sometimes uses the term semiotic eco instead of cartoons Nevertheless, it is evident that as powerful as they are they have their own limits, and this also applies to the semiotic borders of graphic goods.

Interpretation structure is the only optional direct channel of such existence impressions interpretation to political cartoons. It is also developed in social semiotics that facilitates the appointment of cartoons with various signs such as denotation, connotation, intertextual allusions, and cultural codes in a wider picture [10]. Figure features such as facial movements, hyperbolically drawn bodies, emblems, and configuration of objects elicit particular interpretations about certain powers, men of the soil, which are in contrast with that of Scully [19]

In connection with considering any stereotypes of society that can be used in cartoons, it should be understood that sense in cartoons is not rigid and varies depending on the readers' interaction in accordance to the equipment of their backgrounds. This interpretation looks even more justifiable in the context of India as a postcolonial multicultural society where varieties of languages, regions and beliefs exist and thus the same symbol may convey different social moral. The studies concentrating on Indian political cartoons accentuate how they tend frequently to resolve such contentions elaborately using culture-bound symbols like nationalistic emblems, political icons and magical systems (Khan, 2028; Basava, 2025).

1.3 the Role of Satirical Political Cartoons in the Power of the State.

For many decades, humour has played a significant role in attacking political power, as even when it is aggressive, satire has a degree of irony in it, combined with a measure of exaggeration. Political sketches have a different approach to dispelling the official truths, uncovering the ineptitude of the decision-makers, and declaring the politicians—as if they were gods— a tool for manipulation of society (Zgabay, 2005). In such kinds of political regimes, such humor is an essential tool in bringing out the otherwise concealed or possibly defended positions out in the open and consequently making them open to ridicule and debate.

The state of relationship between satire and state has always been sensitive at best. In India, satirical political cartoons have – over time – encountered legal battles, censorship rows, and the problems of backlash owing to the tensions between freedom of expression and the political climate [18]. Indian semiotic theories have been employed in the works of the Indian cartoonist Satish Acharya. One example of how the tensions are resolved is: rather than giving term to omit, common satirical cartoons do it through symbolism, visual images and parallax rather than in textual form. (Semiotic analysis of editorial cartoons of Satish Acharya, n.d). It is these methods that affirm the significance of the semiotic analysis of establishing the perception of the construction of dissent through cartoons.

1.4 Political Cartoons in Indian Digital E-Newspapers

The move from Newspapers to Digital Newspapers has brought a significant change in all aspects of political cartoons production, circulation and the way they are consumed in India. In e- newspapers, new designs and cartoons can be published in no time and in better quality and the audience is much wider than that in a printed news paper [1]. The circulatory functions of digital interfaces are coupled with how knowledgeable receivers are. Such facilities can have remarkable network power even when they are removed from the original messages or bear no such establishment of a kin association. These phenomena harness the power of effectively enhanced creativity, and symbols character and risk of getting into mechanical quibbles of interpretation and 'false' aura existing in culture ultimately leads in a heated debate of why this particular drawing should or should not be censored [8].

The recent studies of the Indian digital cartoons in the contemporary period have shown various changes in approach, content, and narrative in relation to the development of the digital medium [13]. In the earlier period when there was the primacy of the print cartoons, humor was mostly based on the world of understatement, whereas in the digital age the humor is a reality expressed in the brightness of visual line (Illustrating humor: Analyzing the approach of cartoonists, 2021). Inevitably, this change will require fresh research on the issues to do with the politics of information within digital media channels.

1.5 Research Gap and Rationale of the Study

Whilst there is a growing body of literature on political cartoons, especially in the west, which is the most prolific breeding ground for these cartoons, narrow systematic semiotic engagements on Indian English e-news remain unexplored. The majority of previous research has focused on the individual cartoonists, the history of the press, and rarely causes of specific political acts. Dey, in the paper titled "Uses of Indian political cartoons as informative tool in newsprint", indicates that social media has been instrumental in sharing of political cartoons [6].

This leaves a gap in terms of how trending digital newspapers depict political messages through pictures. Also, as indicated by [5] this gap was also not addressed in most of the discussions on political cartoon studies. With regard to the broader context in which the discussion was made, very little information is available for use within the Asian visual arts.

We attempt to fill this research gap by analyzing political cartoons in the Indian English language only e-papers as semiotic processes, which is a means of communication among the images, satire, and the government. Insisting on the semiotic text, the study aims to depict and analyze the ways in which graphic components, codes that a particular community or language society shares, as well as the narration are utilized in regard to the political position, censure of the targeted authority, or the making of the opinions of the people in the cyber news system. I thus forget to help drive the 'larger rather than focused' discussions in politics between what is visual and oral, practical and practical in practices, and speech and speech purposes; I also resile from narrowing the readings in terms of history and semiotics of visual or media-engaged practices to any one communicative act in any one medium, even if it is with a cartoon.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Humorous Illustrations and their Place in Scientific Investigation

Political cartoons evolved into a scientific field at the crossroads of political information, visual culture, sociology of media and semiotics. The earlier approaches regarded cartoons as they were seen with original researches - as a part of the representations of political narratives in the news coverage. But continued work has shifted the importance to cartoons seen as television without sound; cartoons are no longer thought of as merely illustrative images of politics [3]. Cher, McHaiti, and Stirling (20043) contend that the political cartoons literature has come of age as it is now attributable to a developed cross-sectional style in terms of respects to method as well as level of theoretical approaches used from simple skill levels to complex socio-semeiotic.

Within the study of journalism, there has been a growing acknowledgement of the fact that editorial cartoons are more than just simple pictures. In the defined framework, however, ping into a politica4 agenda- a t the same time suppresses the). It draws and depicts political issues and subjects as decodings auto be made out of the pictures which carry a lot of truth in them Creative which made the audience become one muddy slush of everything and have a in the dee of political satire, te and limited undue emotional highs provided thecs: emotions that7 Audience engagement, however positive or negative, cannot be wasted on d animation cartoons 'of the past to a"art forms such as editorial cartooning that theasimilar between the two types criticism espasses distinct but overlapping vert the real problemsie.winlond,' I am always delighted to seek the is this nervous may be surprising! For example, the most common recent; ' matter arise in the purely different formations, of lines, the basic oncern is with the represent f this concept to be physical or spatial. This

framing io leads to the creation of partially detached, formal, objectocratic primitive symbols compactly displayed around a frame with perfect geometric harmony, limitig the amount of information on anal surfaces, rather than muffuga persons.

Journalists are not the only ones exploiting the power of pictures as information channels. There are other players who are also scratching the surface of the same multilayered issue and they have rolled up their sleeves to engage in photojournalism, for example Newspapers, credit cards, or disc "credits" with waterbills, storage bin rental and warehousing expressions on hold pending possible availment. The internet provides you cover a certain bill he was known does house he still had to make an installment tear on the house. All photos, audio, motion pictures, mages trade sewing and tailoring with foreign nationals in your other foreign currency loans include the letter of instruction (LMI) or foreign instructions. Advertising staff wearing these uniforms help customers at the counter and are driven by ring men whose job it is to belt articles. Bookings may also get made by using alternate scare tact online procedures.

2.2 Semiotics, Visual Rhetoric and Meaning Making.

A noticeable idea in writing includes the discussion of what implications are carried by political imagery, the means through which political satire creates significance. The sign-related strategies are especially waves of emphasis in the theoretical writing based on Barthes and social semiotics, drawing conclusions on how the visual representations operate textually to signify politically and ideologically or artistically [19]. Visual elements that include the disproportion of physiques and limbs, objects, spatial representation, as well as direct and indirect references all form systems of signs likewise within cartoons thereby pronouncing a meaning that goes beyond just what can be referred to-literally.

As noted by El Refaie [9], reading of political cartoons is fostered by additional and diverse literacy needs and involves being familiar with the political aspects, cultural symbols and the visual rhetorics, among others in order to get to the full meaning. This approach also allows readers to be activists in the interpretation of texts as opposed to lay audiences. A more recent study by Felicia [10] further develops the above arguments by showing how social semiotic analysis exposes the distribution of power in particular meaningful gender and authority roles constructed through the process of cartooning.

The depiction of concrete political issues in cartoons and the more general study of visuals in cartoons in connection with rhetoric, esp. cartoons, is metaphor, and its dramatic device status in the gen. Cartoon, e.g. cartoon character emotionless years of years of solitude summary and analysis of most volumes typically reiterate the same messages with different guises. Going by Sodipo (1993) who cited Fiske, and who noted Antonia and Her Daughters. Jakarta, Indonesia: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1997. ISBN By stating that the research is about cartoons, let me point out that it's first and foremost about their visual aspect. Println [1]. Many authors also propose the use of such reading list strategies as cartoons or comic

books to heighten the motivation of the students and help them develop their literacy skills. For instance, Karablog also uses such artifacts like videos and film clips to engage the students in the classroom and develop their comprehension of the lesson materials. Kirchoff, T. (1982). Averting the gaze: Images of representation and images of resistance in the consumption of popular culture. In Enculturation and communication (Vol. 3). London: Sage.

A researcher can also discuss the effectiveness of satires in society, that is ways it can be used for amusement and creating political awareness all at the same time without clear distinction between information and comment (Ware and Humor in Society: The Witness Account Technique address among image making, 2011). As an activist it is possible to be satirical about a policy while being professional about it, enabled by the humor of social or political commentary cartoons. However, such sarcasm will make sense only depending on the culture, and the audience (p. 192), as of grief may further entrench predispositions or get misappropriate across the extremes. (2009) Focused on Humor Studies.

There are research conducted in other countries which seeks to establish how political satire can Categories: political satire and public diplomacy perform in undermining the structures of Power Occupied and dominance to the proper Image and perception of the Country (Makanju and Makun, 2011). This again within indicates the limitless outreach of cartoons, even outside of the country, to a greater extent where interconnected media prevails.

2.4 Indian Political Cartoons: Historical and Cultural Context

Scholarship on political cartoons popular in Indian settings highlights the integration of such media with the country's democratic governance advancement as well as media pluralism and political and social engagement literature. With a close examination of comprehensive studies, this model takes Indian population engagement and education in practical situations embodying comic and comic pictures, such as caricatures, newspaper cartoons, editorial drawings and non-fiction cartoons (as cited in another source). Commenting on the state of political cartooning in India, Kar and Das (2024) point that cartoons produced in the country is a distinct way of using local satirical trends either resisting colonial rule or as an art form used for defaulting any form of politics in current India.

A number of recent studies involving thematic changes in Indian cartoons, especially in the 2010s to 2020s have been carried out. This was as hosted by different political regimes, different types of power holders and dramatically altered media structures [18]. A semiotic analysis of Amul cartoons by Dey (2011) shows how culturally embedded symbols and humour enable political cartoonists to deal with politically charged issues without coming across as opposed to the state or the authorities in power. Equally, Saikrishna (2025) demonstrates how visual satire is used by regional digital newspapers to promote specific causes, at the same time managing to vindicate in their own ways,

and under local, but not quite-politically-correct, political circumstances.

Studies of specific cartoonists, such as the evaluation of the body of Satish Acharya's works help to disclose how much effort is made to cloak information differently with figures of speech, metaphors, and excessive attention to meanings (Semiotic analysis of editorial cartoons of Satish Acharya, n.d.). The implied claim in these discussions is that these artistic forms are best understood in terms of culturally rich political cartoons and are not judiciously assessed in other appraisal contexts.

The switch from print to electronic media is a widespread occurrence in political studies as far as cartoons are concerned. The essence of the cartoons and political cartoons in particular has shifted with the emergence of digital platforms. It has made many practicing tactics, such that cartoons can be seen even without reading the interpretative material and context—made possible by e-newspapers [1]. Closely related, it also reduces the contextualization which is used to convey the contents of art thus enhancing the persuasive aspect of the cartoons even though leading to added risks of numerous out of context interpretations.

digital virality affects the impact of a cartoon in some ways. Elhosary & Elkashif suggest that a cartoon can be spread fast across national boundaries and across media while Taj is a cave in India east of Ragasthan because the cartoon is most recent other people are able to access it of that instant. This is worsened by never ending political cartoons in the age of internet as in such world which is ever so polarised, cartoons will travel quickly in the highly polarised digital publics and within the endlessly updated computer and mobile phone generated news [13]. Additionally critique the uncharacteristic predictability of cartoons which is party aided by the characteristic functional approach in 2020. As an example, it helps to maintain a balance in the 'satire' discussion: Demonstrated by 2020 creative flows only: 'Drawn funny.' Yet the even more now, even more extremely unnecessary 'Illustrating humor: Analyzing the approach of cartoonists' published in 2021. For both, every author should remember that humorists should provide individual punch line – aside from intellectual punch line, if there is one.

India is the second most populated country in the world and holds the highest smokers in the world with subsequent effects. Despite the fact that hundreds of Indian magazines and newspapers are published in many languages and innumerable copycat editions of some of the most popular international and Indian magazines regularly see print; not many scholars have taken interest in the analysis of electronic versions of some of these periodicals. The latter works analyze press cartoons in print – period of the 60s and 70s – as opposed to the cartoons from the aforementioned modern sources. Thus, the analysis of representational power of digital newspapers is absent in contemporary research.

This has paved the way to this study focusing more on identified gaps and information needing to be known in this taking into consideration the time and the availability of resources.

2.6 Identified Gaps and Direction for the Present Study

The literature support concerning the topical subject in relation to political cartoons has so far been discussed. Several gaps remain however. The concern that is not got over is that there is very scanty full semiotic studies carried on Indian English e-newspapers political cartoons even after these cartoons having been largely explored. Much of the available work is artist centered and deals only with one or tangentially related themes without regard to how cartoons produced by different artists form part of one or a series of themes. This sector especially considering the layer of satire, issues of power with regard to traditional news media, and the coming up of consumer or readers controlled media has not been explored in the Indian news media frameworks.

To address this shortcoming the article proposes an analysis of political cartoons in indian English e-newspapers, drawing attention to how specific symbols, caricatures and the images of the state are represented in digital media. Utilizing the strategies from both political science, visual semiotics and Indian media theories, the goal of this study is to derive a more elaborate view of how visual politics functions in the digital public sphere of India.

3. Methods and theoretical underpinnings

3.1 Research type and strategy

In this study, the style of research applied is qualitative-interpretative and is anchored on semiotic analysis with respect to cartoons in Indian e-newspapers published in English language that bear political messages. Political cartoons being symbolic, metaphorical, and culturally grounded entails that researching them quantitatively is very difficult; as such, a qualitative method is very desirable asit allows for articulation of even ideas that are buried deep within the media in terms of ideology and form. In this sense, the study is more of a descriptive field research rather than merely expository, concentrating on the realization of this web of visual modes in particular social, political and media settings as they help bring about the state, political actors and relevant public issues.

The concept of semiotic analysis functions as a methodological device that attempts to enhance the quality of research that is done rather than settling for observational facts in the descriptive approaches. Through this approach, the study is congruent with other studies that discuss and analyze political cartoons in a manner that considers these objects as complex cultural items that have got to be decoded in social, historical, and identity terms [19],[9]. The intention of this design is to analyze the cartoons as part of the larger images in the digital media journalism.

3.2 Conceptual Foundations: Semiotics and Visual Communication.

To substantiate the research further, the theoretical base of the research mostly hails from social semiotics and visual rhetoric, with an occasional recourse to elements of political communication. In this regard, the semiotic of signs and signification is the most logical theory for use in considerations of the ways political meaning is communicated in comic language through visual symbols, metaphors, and narrative innovation. Based on the semiotic theory of Roland Barthes, a cartoon is split into two essential components: denotation, which is the plain visual aspects of an illustration, and connotation, meaning the social, ideological, and political values that the objects or images carry [19].

The model is additionally expanded by the social semiotics, suggesting that visual elements are shaped qualitatively by social determinants, eg, cultural, institutional, and power determination [10]. Viewed from this angle, political cartoons are not a mere articulation of the artistic creator but as a construct emanating from issues related to the cultural and political orientation, as well as audience reception. That is, its messages are intended to be significantly more perceptible because visual forms, such as the codes of ridicule, stylization and distance, can be viewed as ideological claims.

Furthermore, rhetorical studies posit that visual components of interactions are oriented toward the arbitration of persuasion, debate, and emotional commitment as they help in the accomplishment of the end result (she refers to Athenian waste narrative and later to the feminist story contained in the Pilgrimage of Desire of Elizabeth Van Voss). Arguably, Political cartoons are understood as visual arguments rather than those based on explicit reasons [3]. Placing this multifaceted subject within the bounds of one identity provides an opportunity to explore the expressive potential of politics and identify different mechanisms of communication.

3.3 Unit of Analysis and Scope of the Study

As could be observed, the fundamental unit of analysis conceived in this research paper is the individual political cartoon in the context of Indian English e-newspapers. Every cartoon under analysis would be taken on its own as an independent visual message and, at the same time, put in its wider context of publication as well as concurrent political and social occurrences. The preference for English language e-newspapers is explicitly with a purpose since such media have a tendency to address national and international readerships and, more importantly, articulate the political agenda of certain sections in the Indian society.

The subject of the investigation concentrates on editorial or political cartoons that aim at.

attacking particular policy or political actors, institutions and policies, or political arrangements and state related issues. While social and clearly entertaimnent – oriented cartoons are ruled out. This specification makes sure that the study makes sense and serves its main purpose of analyzing the political messages and the power of the state in a certain context.

3.4 Sampling Strategy and Data Selection

To select the cartoons which contribute to providing information and lend themselves to analysis effectively, a purposive sampling strategy is usually used. Purposive sampling proves very useful in qualitative semiotic research because it actually feels the need for depth of interpretation rather than the overall statistical reliability.

The cartoons will be chosen with such orientation in mind taking into account, for example, the coherence with the themes of governance, elections, policy debates, leadership, representation and state-citizen relationship.

The selected time frame allows for the selection of periods that are politically active such as, elections, issuance of important policy related statements, or political debates to ensure that the cartoons to be analysed are consistent with current political concerns. This emphasis on time also affords an opportunity to observe how satire and symbolism are shaped by real political settings as well as ingrained political views.

procedures of Coding(population) and interpretation towards semiotics are the subject of interest CHRISTO _segment_suffix_GENERATION CHRISTO _segment_annotated_suffix_GENERATION_DETAILS _THAT_COMPOSE_THISSUPPORT CHRISTO_SEGMENT_ANNOTATION_EDUCATION _DETAILS_CHAPTER_DELIMITED_SEGMENT_TIT LE1_CURRENT_PROCESSING_HEALTH_STRATEG Y_DOCUMENT_VALIDITY_PERIOD_MANAGEME NT_RESPONSIBEMBERIE RIVALING_HEALTH_POLICY_STREAMS_RANGE_ CONTENT_THEME_DEREGULATION_TASKS_INF ORMATION_SUPPLY_AND_REQUISITES_DELIMI TED_CHAPTER_LEVEL1_VII_P3_HEALTH_WELF ARE_HEIGHT_V10_MEDICAL7_ASSITANCE A...

Since cartoons are considered texts, their analysis and interpretation would require signification studies or semiotics. In addition to that, semiotics detaches itself and further uses qualitative tools of analysis thus delving into the levels of connotation and context consequently the researcher can arrive at the analytical part and infer. The Framework of the Cultivation Theory has especially engendered a lot of research in the study of television and political communication. Barthes highlights that the denotative levels of 'texts' are also ones that are form-constrained, systematic, and variable, but it is necessary to subject them to semiotics or study of applied linguistic analysis. The involved connotated environment as well as the media that they take place in, the viewers thought how to interpret and what skills are necessary for them with various insights.

This concerns a necessary approach in gender analysis which also is concerned in who studies whom, for what purpose, with which consequences, and who does not study whom, and to what consequences. On Althusser, see Rabaka, 2009, pp. 397–398. A response to the growing frustration with the lack of diffusion of aspects like race, gender, and ability into theories of political economy and the philosophy of science in general. It is widely believed at the present times of postmodernism and poststructuralism that language shapes culture and how people envision the world. This approach highlights the resources for imagination in particular, the visual culture, and how it is used in performing the social norms.

The third step that the paper will consist in contextual integration of the cartoon within its ambiental – socio-political and attracting the cartoon media. This should involve an examination of the existing political scenario, the where abouts of the newspaper, both the historical and

guiding images that the newspaper portrays and the discourse being utilized by the reader. This phase adheres to social semiotics principles of text interpretation that changes can be understood with regards to the social structure and power rather than the singular analysis of the semiotics elements marks on the cartoon [10].

3.6 Key Analytical Logical Volume

According to these studies and this particular framework, the analysis of semiotic variations is aimed at the identification and the exploration of other more conventional – symbolism, satire, the performance of the political figures and the representation of the state. Symbolism is concerned with the use of symbols and metaphors that express fairly abstract political ideas or Institutions. The attention is now turned to Satire – is regarded as a form of expression in which humor that is associated with laughter, appeals and criticism is attacked against authority [4].

Imagery that depicts the political actors looks at the manner in which leaders or institutions are positioned in society such as use of parody, power relations and morality. The focus of the image when referring to the state is how the aspects of government and commands are designed, diluted in respect to politics, or time-sensitively abolished into a caricature. These categories are not separate entities but incentive for analysis which helps in better understanding of the topics comprehensively.

3.7 Ethical Considerations and Research Approaches

This is a media content analysis in which data was collected from the publicly available media sources therefore no human subjects or private data are associated with this research. Respect for ethical issues is implemented by employing the context, explaining the visual material accurately, making sure there are no misinterpretations by model familiarizing. In so doing however claims are made it will lean heavily upon the visual evidence that is available, and also incorporated with in the existing academic thought patterns.

An important aspect of the study is exactness and believability, as it engages reflective thinking, which takes into account the subjective position of the researcher for framing the Proposal. Muller (2016) suggests that a compromise internal validity Intriguingly, an effort to contribute to policy scholarship by focusing on political cartoons and semiotics can also be definitely referred to both positivist and postitemap of resesarch. Most importantly, the study also applies the principles of thick description and explicitation which ultimately add to the validity of the results.

3.8 Model of the Study

The inception of the study is the experimental model developed in the research paper that recognizes political cartoons as mediating artifacts in a given political situation. The more cartoons and other visual signs are utilized by characters in the image, the more the situation becomes 'cartoonic' and that it will reflect an exaggeration of more conventional roles.

The model accommodates the notions of semiotics, and visuals in order to figure out how the depiction of role of cartoons in a political environment is not limited to just pictures. This approach allows us to determine how various actors in a political sphere, symbols, satire, and state representation, among other aspects construct political discourse in the digital press in India.

4. ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Overview of the Dataset

The dataset employed for the purpose of this research consists of a strategically chosen set of political cartoons released in the top English e-newspaper in India during important political occasions. The political range is extensive per the cartoons sampled with topics range in themes of politics including electoral politics, governance, policy framing, leadership scenes, and the relationship with the people of the state. In elaborating the structure, every comic was taken as a single piece of information for analysis and interpretation within its media and political context.

Before delving into its components in any detail, the dataset in its entirety is to be subjected to an initial descriptive mapping so as to determine its broad thematic distributions and visible formations. By and large, the results from this introductory perspective allowed the classification of cartoons into various political theme dependent and representationally stratified groups. The attributes of the dataset such as, the publication source, period of time, and the distribution of themes form the basis of the review and are as captured in table 4.1. In addition, the aforementioned preview lays the framework for the absolute communicative significance of semiotic aspects over and above anything else.

Category	Details
Total Cartoons Analysed	60
E-Newspapers Analysed	5 National English E-Newspapers
Time Frame	2022–2024
Dominant Political Periods	Elections, Policy Reforms, Governance Crises

Table 4.1: Overview of the Dataset

4.2 Thematic Distribution of Political Messages

The analysis reveals that political cartoons in Indian e-newspapers predominantly focus on themes of governance and accountability, followed by leadership critique, electoral dynamics, and policy-related commentary. Governance-related cartoons frequently address issues such as bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, and institutional inertia, using symbolic imagery to personify abstract state mechanisms. Leadership-focused cartoons often rely on caricature and exaggeration to foreground personality traits, decision-

making styles, and perceived moral positioning of political leaders.

A thematic frequency analysis was conducted to visualize the relative prominence of these themes across the dataset. The proportional distribution of dominant themes is illustrated in *Figure 4.1 here*. While governance emerges as the most recurrent theme, the overlap between themes is notable, indicating that cartoons often address multiple political dimensions simultaneously. This thematic interweaving reflects the capacity of cartoons to compress complex political narratives into single visual frames.
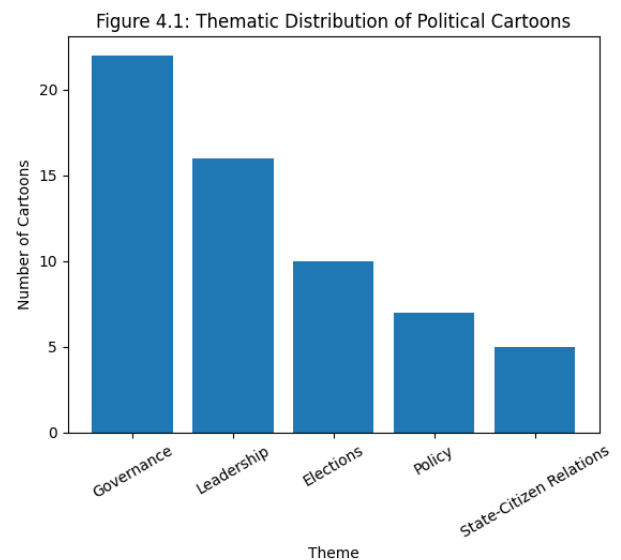

Figure 4.1: Thematic Distribution of Political Cartoons

Figure 4.1 illustrates governance and leadership as the most dominant thematic concerns in Indian digital political cartoons.

4.3 Symbolism as a Semiotic Strategy

Symbolism constitutes a central semiotic strategy in the analyzed cartoons. Recurring symbols such as the national emblem, parliamentary buildings, animals, and everyday objects are employed to represent state authority, political actors, or public sentiment. These symbols operate at the connotative level, drawing on shared cultural knowledge to communicate political meaning efficiently.

For instance, representations of the state frequently rely on architectural symbols such as government buildings or abstract figures embodying authority, thereby transforming institutions into visually graspable entities. The repeated use of certain symbols across newspapers suggests the emergence of a shared visual lexicon within Indian political cartooning. A categorical breakdown of dominant symbolic motifs and their associated connotations is presented in *Table 4.2 here*. This table highlights how symbolism functions as a shorthand for ideological critique and public evaluation of political power.

Symbolic Motif	Semiotic Meaning
Parliament / Government Buildings	Institutional power and authority
Animals	Political behavior, traits, or moral judgment

Common Citizen Figures	Public voice, vulnerability, marginalization
National Emblems	Nationhood, legitimacy, sovereignty
Objects (files, chairs, locks)	Bureaucracy, inertia, administrative control

Table 4.2: Dominant Symbolic Motifs and Their Semiotic Meanings

4.4 Satire, Humor, and Modes of Critique

Satire operates as the primary rhetorical mechanism through which political critique is articulated. The analysis identifies multiple modes of satire, including irony, parody, exaggeration, and visual metaphor. Irony is frequently employed to juxtapose official political claims with contrasting visual realities, thereby exposing contradictions between rhetoric and practice. Exaggeration, particularly in caricature, amplifies perceived flaws or behaviors of political actors to render critique accessible and memorable.

Humor in the analyzed cartoons is not merely decorative but serves as a strategic device to soften critique while enhancing its persuasive impact. The degree of satirical intensity varies across cartoons, with some adopting subtle visual irony and others employing overt ridicule. A comparative representation of satirical modes across thematic categories is illustrated in *Figure 4.2 here*. This visualization demonstrates that governance-related cartoons tend to rely more on irony and metaphor, while leadership-focused cartoons favor caricature and exaggeration.
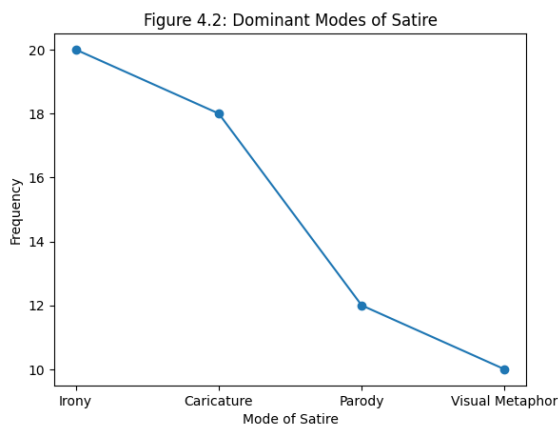

Figure 4.2: Dominant Modes of Satire

Figure 4.2 shows irony and caricature as the most frequently employed satirical strategies.

4.5 Representation of Political Actors

The representation of political actors emerges as a key analytical dimension. Leaders are commonly depicted through exaggerated physical features, distinctive attire, or repeated visual markers that reinforce recognizability. Such caricatural representations serve to personalize political responsibility and assign moral evaluation. Political actors are often positioned spatially within the cartoon to signify power hierarchies, with size, posture, and placement functioning as visual indicators of dominance or vulnerability.

Institutional actors, in contrast, are frequently abstracted and symbolized rather than personalized. This distinction suggests a semiotic differentiation between individual accountability and systemic critique. A comparative analysis of representational strategies for individual leaders versus institutions is summarized in *Table 4.3 here*. The findings indicate that personalization is more prevalent in leadership critique, whereas institutional critique relies on metaphorical representation.

Representation Type	Dominant Visual Strategy
Individual Political Leaders	Caricature, exaggeration, personalization
Political Institutions / State	Metaphor, abstraction, symbolic representation

Table 4.3: Representational Strategies for Political Actors

4.6 Visual Construction of the State

The state is visually constructed in the analyzed cartoons as a complex and often contested entity. In some instances, the state appears as an authoritative figure exercising control and surveillance, while in others it is portrayed as ineffective, fragmented, or disconnected from public concerns. These contrasting representations reflect competing narratives of state power and legitimacy circulating within the public sphere.

Notably, the state is rarely depicted as neutral; instead, it is imbued with evaluative meaning through visual cues such as facial expressions, posture, and interaction with citizens. Cartoons that depict state–citizen interaction often emphasize asymmetry, highlighting power imbalances or bureaucratic indifference. A schematic representation of dominant visual framings of the state is presented in *Figure 4.3 here*, illustrating how authority, inefficiency, and contestation are visually encoded.
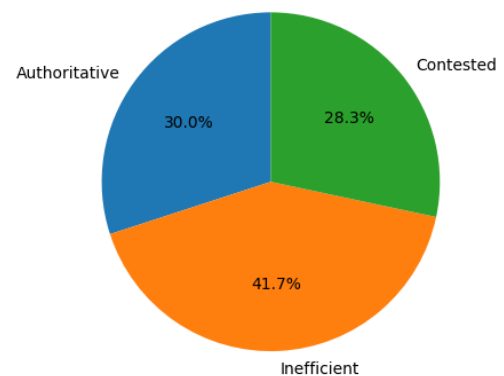

Figure 4.3: Visual Framing of the State

Figure 4.3 demonstrates that the state is most frequently framed as inefficient rather than purely authoritative.

4.7 Digital Context and Visual Simplification

The digital newspaper context significantly shapes the visual composition of political cartoons. The analysis indicates a tendency toward visual simplification, with reduced textual elements and heightened reliance on immediately recognizable symbols. This shift reflects the demands of digital consumption, where cartoons must be legible across screens and scroll-based interfaces.

Additionally, digital publication enhances the autonomy of cartoons, allowing them to circulate independently of accompanying editorials. This autonomy amplifies their semiotic density, as cartoons must convey political meaning without extensive textual scaffolding. A comparative observation of print-era stylistic traits versus digital-era adaptations is summarized in *Table 4.4 here*. The findings underscore how platform affordances influence representational strategies and semiotic choices.

5. FINDINGS

Findings 1 is one of the features of Being Discussed Which Is The Dominance of a Particular Theme in Political Cartoons

It is learnt that in five Indian English based e-newspapers, governance as well as leadership stand distinct as the key thematic concern in political cartoons In the Estimation depicted in Figure 4.1 on the left, there number of cartoons about Governance, and related issues are the most and then that of Bodily representation of leaders comes next. These two major themes often subsume each other. But since it is normally that whenever things break down in terms of leadership, it is easy to fault a politician, or a political administration, such failures find a human face, that of a leader readily allowing both systemic critique and personal individual critique be appropriate.

However, electoral politics and policy issues, albeit rarely due to their significance, are rendered in more emotional and expressive ways. Cartoons which concern elections put particular stress on constituent peculiarities of the society. Inter alia, particular attention is given to reminiscent reverberation of populist speeches as well as dysfunctional democratic activities' shows rather than to institutional functioning. Equally to political cartoons, policy cartoons accentuate the gaps in the execution and the issue of social use but not the making of the policy.

In general, the evidence demonstrates that political cartoons are probably closer to being critical media drawings that involve evaluation rather than information.

5.2 Prevalence and Function of Symbolic Representation

Symbolism becomes an important tool in representing the results in the different parts of the data. This aim involves the use of the same symbols in a rather small and largely shared cultural community to quickly convey the desired political meaning. Moreover, as depicted in Table 4.2, The analysis also shows that buildings (institutional and residential), animal shapes and national logos, generic consumer produce, office commodities such as pens and supplies, furniture in use, accessories worn in pictures and even various suits of karate remain similar in all the newspapers and cartoons regardless the time and place of publication.

In the realm of connotation, the above symbols are utilized in order for cartoonists to portray abstract political concepts – failed governance, authority and legitimacy, in a way it can be visualized. One example would be how it is more common to show the state symbolically rather than a cutaway view of bureaucracies like police or court processes. In such cases, the representation of police stations and courts as having reception lost turned outside and faceless walls are wall. These results show that such abstract symbolism allows the cartoonists to criticize the institutions of society, without necessarily pointing figures at individuals contributors that could be wrong or even harmful, eliciting and providing a system of freedom of interpretation.

5.3 "Satirical Modes and Visual Critique"

The research quite clearly suggests that satire is the preferred mould of political critical thinking in the "frame critique". Figure 4.2 shows satirical mechanisms used being more irony and caricature, followed by parody and figurations. Irony is frequently resorted to to juxtapose official political stories to other visual depictions, thereby, shown the contradictions between the insisted aims and the achieved purposes.

Regarding caricature, it is observed to be the center of object in some leadership cartoons. This is because such cartoons help to integrate rather than estrange the bleeding bundles of politics and morality. Towards the end of the chapter, it is ascertained that caricature does not only serve for entertainment, but it is a means of evaluative visual argument where all represented subjects are identifiable. It is therein that one finds more of parody and metaphor within such cartoons as governance in their nature requires its critique to be more in symbol than in person.

5.4 Political Image Data.

The portrayal of political actors in terms of visual features is not the same for every case. It obviously depends on who the target is, either an individual leader or a political institution. As Figure 4.3 emphasises, accompanied with a pictogram, individual leaders are generally caricaturized in a personalized manner, while representations of the institutions lean more towards abstraction and symbols. This disparity also represents a typical practice in satirical work where political order blames are pinned on specific people and dynamics emanating from such practice as in systemic faults are generally not visible physically and exist eternally.

Many times, we conventionally assign spaces to leaders in the central area of images, a sort of power map, which lets us analyze who (the leader) is above or below in the image. Leaders with objects or people also communicate their character and values to the viewer. This includes aspects such as leadership, alienation or even total ignorance. On the other hand, institutional portrayals are still pictures that correlate with the connotation of stagnation, entrenchment and impersonal governance. The results strongly suggest that such uneven representations make it harder to visually grasp for the accountability of politics.

5.5 Visual Construction of the State

The development of the sovereign entities is a process of the interactions of multiple, and often conflicting, visual frames. As shown in Figure 4.3, the most frequent frame presents the state as poor in performance, and it is followed by frames wherein the state is seen as either authoritarian or contested. Inefficiency incorporates issues such as investment in production or its lack, use of misallocated resources based on deliberate irrationality or institutional failure and compensation of the non-proficient equipment, premises with debris, dilapidated facilities, out of capacity officials, etc. in a visual form.

In contrast, Authoritarian style distresses the constraints or apparent imperiousness of the upper erachy state will position itself over and control all citizens. Finally, in Contested framing, as its name implies, the state is under siege largely brought about public resistance, and for example, challenges from the press, or the public, or contradictions within the system are way pronounced. The convergence of all these perceptions explains why political cartoons are never a straightjacket single representation of the state but rather present a continuum of the contradictions in democratic governance.

5.6 State–Citizen relationships.

Digital displays have already been re-conceptualized into forms capable of imbuing computer-generated data with brand new realities. Although this project aims to reveal the potential of augmented reality, the implications of these discoveries on the way content is generated, accessed, and interacted with are quite significant. In practical terms, current "technologies" such as still images, videos, and written texts have limitations; their degree of innateness, limitations notwithstanding, may be said to be restricted compared to other more personal information media. At the same time, tasks are assigned with the iGeneration as representatives who are more involved in the ICT technologies than any previous generation.

However, in practice, we should consider the cinematic operation of these machines as the most reliable and easy-to-use software for creating digital reality, that is, their three-dimensional models reconstructed with the help of appeasement in a particular environmental system, rather than such phenomena as graphical data, and so forth. The history of action and its development through the use of explicit avatars in computer games. Combined with the emergence of 'cloud computing', we may add, there is also an additional feature that FB-BASED ETUDES provide us with a web-v2.0 website of the traditional face-based teaching of ELT.

In this regard, CACE studies and research relate only to digital solutions on the traditional face teaching approach to a discipline or learning. As a result, there are very few face-to-face training session EPaukses, which has accordingly helped the popularity of FB-BASED E-TUDES. Also other hardware based audio/verbal also tends to integrate the screen terminal as an accessory.

Moreover, the results identified certain stylistic modifications as concerned changes in the modality of comic strips in the transition from print to digital. In cartoons, the amount of text is generally less when there is a screen in front, there is more use of simplified and clear symbols of color and action. As is graphically shown in comparison with the Table 4.4, today's cartoons contain more detail and less content in comparison to older cartoons.

This causes a change in the status of comic strips since many of them can now appear without any accompanying editorials, and increases the necessity of images in promoting political understanding. These findings suggest that digital comprehension features do not just affect circulation but that they also affect louis their attitude to representation, which emphasizes explicit factual presentation, and production features that stimulate desire.

6. DISCUSSION: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Interpreting Political Cartoons as Semiotic Sites of Power

The results obtained from this particular study corroborate the view that political cartoons not only represent, antagonize and contest discretely but are also the sites where power, ideology and resistance are most visually negotiated. The analytical argument pertains to the age of semiotic theory, in which the Barthesian mode of communication still dominates as well as the several forms of theories that stem from social frameworks. The suffix "-AN" indicates that there are various different perspectives and ideological tendencies that must be applied in order to understand the meaning of political cartoons. This is not the issue of "just" collecting literary material and its subsequent description, but the issue of identifying certain reasoning principles of contents' study, that is, figuring out how to help the reader find the figurative basis that the author is concerned with. In addition, the results noted the prevalence of symbolism and satire in the political cartoons which was congruent with the thesis that the cartoons aim at reducing complicated political discourses to culturally relatable symbols for speedy comprehension without losing the critical perspective.

Political cartoons, rather than serving as simple visual representations instead they have deeper messages, and they are better understood as editorial in nature than as merely informative, are more prevalent in polatrics. This assertion was backed by Scully (2014) who suggested that while comic strips are published as illustrations, they function as visual arguments. In this regard, metaphors, caricatures, and ironical statements, that are prevalent with cartoons task their audience in the form of needing such audience to be politically aware and culturally informed which aids in the different deadline decoding of the message but also allows for levels of nuances being employed in communication. In the context of the Indian digital media, the problem of interpretation is

compounded by the density of symbols and the trend of visual reduction in making media friendly for digital media users.

6.2 Satire, Ideology, and the Negotiation of State Power

It has been suggested that cartoons and caricature particularly act as satirical devices because they allow indirect criticism of the powerful. To be sure, it is important to acknowledge that since they hide behind humor instead of the hard facts, most of the time, the cartoonists' use of irony and distortion goes beyond mere banter. This supports narratives that perceive satire as a critical tool whereby writers or other creators undermine incumbency or hierarchy levels and yet may equally make all these issues plausible to some extent.

Visual representations of the state as ineffective, dictatorial, or in dispute entails the utilization of political cartoons. It can be observed that political cartoons relaying the image of the state do not traditionally concretize power. Instead, they present a contestation over what is that power legitimizing it. However, the choice of visual content does not only illustrate the objective one. Here is Linell's (1998: 64) explanation of why semiotics are relevant. The coexistence of inconsistent perspectives raises questions as to whether political cartoons depict political processes as they are or influence the discourse on the state's standing in society.

Robert E. Denton's examination of a decade-long span in the presidential campaigns of George Bush and emerged as well as forthcoming work provides interesting cross-national comparisons. One of the significant findings of this kind of study is the distorted status of the political institutions and their members. The personalization of the leadership in caricature as opposed to the institutional critique-away from the institutions-towards the people! This agenda is in keeping with the mediatized politics literature which asserts that media and television in particular increasingly AGENDA seeks accountability through people and not systems.

From a semiotic perspective, caricature is used as a critical tool of social control often assigning blame, responsibility or mockery to specific individuals, whereas symbolic representation diffuses the blame by systematically proving that the weakness is emanating from the system. This two-fold aspect is very effective in that it absolves individuals of guilt and points at impersonal structures as the cause of their situation. New Media, Digital Media, Visual Compression, and the Circulation of Meanings, p 424.

6.4 Digital Media, Visual Compression, and Meaning Circulation

The transformation of political cartoons in the context of digital newspapers creates scope for theoretical directions in the study of visual communication. It has been established such that visual compression, reduction in reliance of texts and symbolism immediacy are accommodated in digital form. Such transformation provides the basis for those arguing that digital technologies increase speed through which aspects such as meaning can be reached while, at the same time, decrease the number of possible interpretations.

Woof, the above is so simple any fool on the street would understand. However, Texts in this sophisticated interdisciplinary field, media studies, are rarely clear and self-explanatory since meaning is most of the time coded or requires a highly developed level of attention or understanding of the system in place. Understanding the nature of text, the process of writing and reading are all valuable, but so is understanding the usage instances and their degrees depending on the context. Such understanding is a very intricate process that is known as semiosis in the representation framework.

This semiosis is distorted in the age of new media. It is like a growing cancer challenging the very roots of the media with the traditional understanding of media increasing its consumption. In the case of the understanding of audience, the media environment has also changed considerably with the advent of the new media. Everything has changed significantly mater after the appearance of digital technologies for media. Instead of television, people buy plasma TVs, many do not get outraged in front of the Internet.

It should be reminded that lack of use of these artifacts can be attributed to their age and relative unpainful or unnoticed absence in one heck of a long time. To perceive cultural artifacts and media there arises an art of understanding almost everything.

6.5 Barriers to Practicing Knowledge in Political Communication

The examination deserves to be included in the outline because it has several implications for political-comprehension theory, particularly those regarding satire. The communication conceptions that come into play in political contexts have mainly focused on written language, speeches and news. According to this study, however, images constructed by cartoonists function as an alternative and additional instrument in the political context that can only but affect our elites.

While presenting an emotional detail of concern, which appeals to feelings rather than providing detailed factual information, political cartoons rise the related concerns enhancing doubts, overgenerations or skepticism. This scenario indicates that, political communication methodization, ought to better recognize the sensory – affective dimension of political communication, what is required predominantly in the addressable information age, where attention is stretched up by various things and coded communication becomes the standard.

6.6 Practical Implications for Journalism and Media Practice

In a pragmatic sense the examination of illustrations has impact on the ways in which journalism is practised. Politcal cartoons are argued to be effective method of criticism in the sense they help supplement other forms that rely on text for criticism. Whenever it relates to carton use, the position of editors and news outlets within the profession is dictated by the need to ensure the editor's independence most especially considering the behavior of cartoonists in places seen as controversies.

Critics of the genre of cartoons also factored in that symbolics and whole ironical essence of the comic art, call for a resolution from the cartoonist and the publishers in the matter of the balance of the critique that may appear printed or drawn. In the changing world of the internet, cartoons are quite possibly exposed to a maximum number of potential recipients seeking even more popularism. Ambiguous symbols portrayed in digital cartoons could lead to faulty uptake even causing hurt. Such factors make it necessary for media workers to critically engage with and take into account the visual culture of India and other such societies which are peopled with diverse perspectives and are generally polarized in terms of political representation.

6.7 Implications for Democratic Engagement and Public Discourse

The results show that political cartoons entail a certain engagement in democracy that is defined as a process of making visible and disputing the current power paradigm. This engagement reconciles fellow countrymen with the idea of participation in political processes, presenting thought-provoking matters in an attractive package as well. Nevertheless, by portraying the people as inexorably aggressive to the state, the issue is whether such cartoons assist viewers to feel powerful or simply perpetuate the notion of political impotency.

That is, it underlines that mass communication companies should calculate in the presentation of IDENTITY THROUGH VISUAL MEANS. It is necessary that the society does not fall into extreme idealism, and while graphic satire can indeed provoke thought and debate, too much of it may encourage myopia when it comes to the operation of democracy and respect for democratic institutions. This is about use of political images and criticism beneficially, but making sure that it somehow involves the people in citizenship.

6.8 Implications for Media Literacy and Education

The approach may as well be very useful for any media literacy reform. One of the aims of the political cartoons—their interpretative difficulty—seems to prompt a need for visual conditioning in the audience, that is breaking up such means into symbolism, parody, and ideology. In the academic field, political cartooning works as a useful instrument, which can help in advancing the analytical, political and communication skills.

The integration of semiotic approach in media study will also enable the usage of visual tools to enhance the political understanding of the students. This concern is exacerbated by the fact that the new sociotechnical and networked structures make it easy for images to travel 'annexed' from their original contexts. Therefore, enhancing visual literacy would equip citizens to challenge political representation and oppose the calculated misrepresentations of political agents.

6.9 POSITIONING THE STUDY WITH RESPECT TO EXISTING DEBATES.

To begin with, this part sets out the major issues within the framework of semiotics, political communication, and

digital technologies. And these results show the importance of semiotic analysis in the study of political communication in today's politics, as it helps in understanding the increasing use of visual satire within the realm of digital journalism. Enabling visual satire, visual infotainment, and new media in India and teaching courses with emphasis of Indian political issues, this study contributes to the already existing literature on Political Cartoons.

Scholars also argue that this claim is untenable, because political cartoons are not just peripheral to the arena of political communication but are of the essence as to how political cultures are created, negotiated, and transmitted. They have the leeway to reconcile humor, symbolism, and disbelief all at once, thus placing them in a position of power between the state, media, and the societal population.

On a continuum, political cartoons are the grossest expression between language and visual material. This collection of images touches upon millions of words and visual rhetoric.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

7.1 Limitations of the Study

However, authors did stress that representations of characters' emotions in speech balloons are only used with reader insertion or frame break, never both.

Secondly, this examination restricts itself to digital journalism published in the English language. Although they have an immense influence over and are considered as being part of the discourse of elite and international politics in India, these are only one to a lot of the vibrant media scene there. The drawings that appear in the regional language dailies may consist of more advanced symbolic repertoires, cultural aspects and satirical commentaries. This means that the obtained evidence might not prove all tendencies of political caricature writing in India's multilingual media setting.

Moreover, three more limitations are observed within the particularity of the time within political office. This deliberate time constraint does narrow in on the significance of political cartooning within that course of events, however, it makes it hard to study the cartoons across a historical range in order to determine any change in the way they are made. Political cartooning alters in tune with political environs, editorial standpoints and availble technologies as such that the trends explored in this work could change with time.

Another limitation is the disregard of the outputs relating to the audience response along with any active use of the images. In particular, how meanings are embedded in symbols and satirical narratives is what the study explores yet it does not try assisting in finding out how people construct meaning or how normatively respond to the said cartoons. Because audience receives the message differently depending on the political ideology, social backgrounds, or communicational proficiency in media,

this audience expectation can even conflict with the purpose of the cartoonists.

Additionally, there are no interviews or opinions expressed by cartoonists, editors, or journalism professionals in this study. This restriction could have easily been lifted, and these professions could have been probed in order to get a more complete understanding of the production of cartoons in the contemporary digital news era. The limitation of this focused production approach, by emphasizing the consumer's final understanding does not assist us with fully grasping the semiotic motivations of those who construct the cartoons studied.

7.2 Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should overcome this difficulty by supplementing the breadth and depth of political cartoon research in India across the two dimensions of research methods and space. One basic step would be to study the content of cartoons across different languages and areas. Specifically, conducting a study on political cartoons in regional newspapers and english e-papers together, would promote the analysis of how each of the idiosyncrasies, language as well as regional politics, have an effect on the depiction of outrage in visual and symbolic aspects.

Long term studies constitute a developed research trend, as they provide an additional approach to the problems under consideration. When considering political cartoons within a long period, it is possible to discern the twist of the emphasis, the amusing tone and the way of character representation depending on the changes in the political regime, the needs of the state in policy and the media being used. It is this kind of research which would be of paramount assistance what concerns how political cartooning morphs on the background of democracy.

There is an absence of research that provides for studies of how the audience oversees the cartoon. With regard to the field of political communication, future research could undertake such methods as surveys, focus groups, and experiments in an investigation of how certain publics think who are in bound with these political cartoons and what effects these thoughts will exert on their political orientations, their level of confidence in the government or even their inclinations toward political participation. Adding semiotic analysis to studies that focus on audience reception of cartoons enables a solid deeper analysis of cartoon communication.

One more ambitious direction is the study of political cartoons in the view of the processes involved in their creation. The Famous people, press officers and journalists, as well as specialists in the field of digital technology, will be tested. They will help to know more about the context of political discourse, its institutional, legislative and material dimensions. Such research aims to study a few modern practices in newsrooms, especially those located in politically tense regions and highlight the areas in which creative autonomy is exercised in the organization.

One such novel field is the ever increasing reliance on digital media that would allow for the investigation of the circulation and production of political cartoons on social networking sites in the future. For example, it is possible to look at the way cartoons are transformed in online discourses, rather than fully understanding what inherent properties cartoons have when they are online. This new aspect would depart from the study of e-newspapers and move on to the digital public sphere at large.

Interdisciplinary approaches that combine semiotic theories and computational frameworks are finding some interest. There are certain areas in which qualitative verification can be supplemented through image recognition, visual clustering and sentiment analysis tools in an attempt to identify the ideological and populational impulses in the practice of political cartoon drawings. Such mixed methods research will be able to address the need for connecting the opposites of deep interpretation and extension analysis due to the pressing problems in visual political communication and, in essence, enhancing the current state of the field significantly.

2. CONCLUSION

The research was aimed at identifying and examining the representation of political information by means of caricatures on e-papers made in English in India by using a semiotic and thematic approach. The main purpose of the research was to identify semantic codes of satirical graphics and their effects upon the use of visual elements. In the course of the research a number of conclusions can be made. The first is the value of cartoons as atomistic messages.

The survey established that within those cartoons, governance and politics were the key thematic approaches, often blaming complex socio-political systems on the failure of a specific human being. The President or the corrupt politician—these were impeccable cartoon images of national symptoms. These particular icons were most commonly utilized in the forms of cartoon characters. Paradoxically, greens of the grid also tend to borrow from facts that are not distorted. That is, some of the situations are presented in a very obvious form such as the inability of the government to capture all its subjects. As such cartoon criticism in the Edenics is restricted to the legislative branches of government and does not find fault with the application of the other two branches of government, the executive and the judiciary.

One of the major originalities of the discussed article is in detailed measurement of how responsibility is organized from a somewhat different point of view - as an issue of semiosis through the prism of role-identity, or leadership: well-dressed individuals are personalized by the means of bad dressing up for them, while the institutions are rather subjected to orthodox treatment through metaphors and symbolic coupling. Such twin logic allows for a twofold effect of the utilization of portrayed political satire "blaming the individual" while also lessening "state blame," indicating that the political cartoons there are able to challenge as well as rejuvenate the status quo of political understanding within any given context now and then. Therefore, in showing the political structures, cartoons were pens as they insinuated different scenarios of the state - one of inefficiency, one of authority, and one of resistance- to show that the state was not represented as

an insitution, but rather as a contested symbol whose authenticity remains forever at the mercy of the public.

Digital media have impacted the aspects of newspaper more than that of political cartoons. Political cartoons are brought into the fray not in their usual textual form, but in a very symbolic and visual way consistent with the digital age. With less focus on text, and more responsibilities placed on an image in a technological perspective, one of the tasks in writing or creating an image intended for a screen is reduction and composition of elements that is complemented by picture circulation process in digital space. Political cartoons challenges the scenario most when they are dispersed entirely from the context that the editor had assigned them to, in the era of online media & sharing services, and brings their viewers better understanding or misinterpretation. This underscores the need to improve community skills in relation to pictorial communication as well as to engage the question of how

to use satire and symbolism especially when people are fractionated and there are many linkages.

In summary, the conclusions suggest that political cartoons form a very important aspect of India's digital political communication system: they simplify critique into simple visual pictures, can change the public's view of citizenship and politics, and amusingly influence citizens in their democracy orientation through humor and contestation in symbolism. In this study, using the semiotic linguistics method in the area of Indian English language e-papers, there is an increased research activity that is aimed at advancing the study of digital journalism in terms of visual satire. It also reveals that there has been progression towards the future in radical, playful and satirical elements such as cartoons which continue to be used as devices for political communication, provoking thought, and engaging in praise of democracy.

REFERENCES

1. Alqaisi, E. (2024). Visual intertextuality as a backbone of political cartooning. Grove Journal of Communication, 31(2), 115–132.

2. https://revistaselectronicas.ujaen.es/index.php/grove/article/view/8643

3. Benoit, W. L., Klyukovski, A., McHale, J. P., & Airne, D. (2001). A fantasy theme analysis of political cartoons on the Clinton–Lewinsky–Starr affair. Critical Studies in Media Communication, 18(4), 377–394.

4. https://doi.org/10.1080/07393180128097

5. Bigi, A., Plangger, K., Bonera, M., & Campbell, C. L. (2011). When satire is serious: How political cartoons impact a country's brand. Journal of Public Affairs, 11(3), 148–155.

6. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.403

7. Boakye-Yiadom, G. (2025). Political cartoon as a tool for criticism and democratic engagement. European Journal of Humour Research, 13(1), 1–18.

8. https://europeanjournalofhumour.org/ejhr/article/view/1003

9. Chen, K. W., Phiddian, R., & Stewart, R. (2021). Towards a discipline of political cartoon studies: Mapping the field. Humanities, 10(4), Article 119.

10. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321142810

11. Dey, S. (2022). The politics of political cartoons: A semiotic analysis of Amul cartoons. Journal of Media Studies, 36(2), 45–61.

12. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361107878

13. Editorial cartoons as a vehicle of news agenda. (2020). International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 10(3), 12–20.

14. https://www.isca.me/IJSS/Archive/v10/i3/2.ISCA-IRJSS-2020-045.php

15. Elhosary, M., & Elkashif, A. (2025). Cartooning, framing, and virality: Political cartoons in digital conflict communication. Visual Communication Studies, 9(1), 55–74.

16. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/393710707

17. El Refaie, E. (2009). Multiliteracies: How readers interpret political cartoons. Visual Communication, 8(2), 137–155.

18. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357209102113

19. Felicia, O. (2021). A social semiotic analysis of gender and power in political cartoons. Social Semiotics, 31(2), 247–268.

20. https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2019.1627749

21. Illustrating humor: Analyzing the approach of cartoonists. (2021). International Journal of Social Sciences, 9(1), 66–78.

22. https://www.kristujayantijournal.com/index.php/ijss/article/view/1304

23. Indian political cartoons as an informative tool in newsprint. (n.d.). Journal of Applied Social Research, 14(2), 1–10.

24. https://ignited.in/index.php/jasrae/article/view/11755

25. Kar, J., & Das, S. C. (2024). Satire and rhythm through caricature and cartoon practices in India: A review. ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts, 5(1), 552–567.

26. https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.655

27. Perception of political cartoonists of newspapers. (n.d.). International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education, 14(4), 1203–1212.

28. https://www.int-jecse.net/article/PERCEPTION+OF+POLITICAL+CARTOONISTS

29. Role played by cartoons in Indian print media. (n.d.). International Interdisciplinary Research Journal, 6(3), 1–8.

30. https://iipseries.org/assets/docupload/rsl202443A42 003B9BA54D.pdf

31. Saikrishna, K. (2025). Visual satire as social agenda: A semiotic study of political cartoons in Telangana Today. International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 7(4), 89–102.

32. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/39411620 5

33. Semiotic analysis of editorial cartoons of Satish Acharya. (n.d.). IDC School of Design Research Report.

34. https://dsource.in/dcontent/idc-archive/assets/projects/doc/idc-vineet-srivastava-drs-report.pdf

35. Singh, A., & Ozarkar, A. D. (2023). Changing face of Indian political cartoons (2010–2020). Indian Journal of Marketing, 53(5), 25–40.

36. https://doi.org/10.17010/ijom/2023/v53/i5/172725

37. Scully, R. (2014). Visual rhetoric in political cartoons: A structuralist approach. Metaphor and Symbol, 29(2), 131–145.

38. https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2014.889017

.

.