

IDEOLOGICAL AND STEREOTYPICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE POLITICAL ELITES: A STUDY OF THE EDITORIAL CARTOONS IN *THE NATION*

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Abstract

The present paper attempts to explore and analyze the discursive and semiotic strategies used by the editors and cartoonists to ideologically and stereotypically represent the Pakistani political elites and thereby shaping and constructing the readers' ideologies and world views. A multimodal discourse study is conducted for the analysis of the editorial cartoons purposively selected from a Pakistani English newspaper The Nation. The multimodal discourse analysis of the editorial cartoons reveals that the editors and cartoonists favour one group of the political elites (in-group) over the other (out-group). In the modern world of science and technology, electronic and print media as sources are used to communicate, negotiate and exchange news and information with the audience and readers, using verbal and visual signs (pictures/images). Editorial cartoons as media discourses are one of the sources for spreading and sharing the news and information related to satire, irony and criticism. The findings indicate that the editors and cartoonists, being political, perspectival and ideological, attribute good qualities to the in-group political elites and represent them as honest and truthful. Moreover, they associate bad qualities to the out-group political elites and stereotype them as dishonest and untruthful.

Keywords: Editorial cartoons; Representation; Stereotyping; Ideological square

INTRODUCTION

Media is a powerful source of communication, whether it is print, electronic or social media. It has always been a good source of information and it has played a significant role in shaping the ideas of a community. The media presents positive or negative images of politicians, which highly influence the worldview of the common man and then deals with them as portrayed in the media. One among the best

communicative sources to convey a positive or negative image of the political personalities is the editorial cartoon. The political cartoonists use editorial cartoons as a medium of communication to comment, criticize and stereotype the political personalities because cartoons as semiotic signs/images are more meaningful than words.

The present study investigates the editorial political cartoons published in the Pakistani English newspaper *The Nation*, from January 2013 to April 2016. The study aims to discuss the power of editorial political cartoons and its role in representation and stereotyping the Pakistani politicians, using discourse analysis models. The study also focuses on certain issues that influence cartoonists, the policy of the newspaper, creativity, previous knowledge and personal affiliation. It attempts to explore the mentality of a cartoonist which polarizes the political parties and politicians into good or bad or in-group and out-group.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The study seeks to answer the following research question:

How do the editors and cartoonists ideologically and stereotypically represent the Pakistani political elites in the editorial cartoons in the daily *The Nation*?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

The current study adopts Van Dijk's (2002) views on ideology and self/other representations. He is of the view that social groups construct ideologies, based on mental models in terms of 'We,' 'Our' and 'Them.' The 'We' group represents themselves better than the 'Them' group. Related to the ideas of Van Dijk (2002), Wodak's (2004) ideas of 'Other,' considering in-group better than out-group to stereotype out-group as negative and in-group as positive, have been adopted for the study. The ideas of Van Dijk and Ruth Wodak have been adopted for the verbal clues (captions) in editorial cartoons.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of the related literature includes a study on the theoretical framework. The chapter views the related literature by different linguists and theorists and its contribution to the present research. The chapter includes various ways of Pakistani and other scholars, how they analyze cartoons through different methods and models. Leeuwen and Kress (2011) say that all the semiotic modes are perceived as one whole by the recipient. The images facilitate interpretation of the people by suggesting, appealing and through connotation. The cartoons are filled with different semiotic modes, drawn from different social angles to create space among

interpretations in multimodal discourse texts. The cartoonists portray the targeted people in the cartoons with different negative stereotypes and intercultural representations. The researcher argues that for the representation of “*Others*”. The cartoonists use metaphors and symbols while emotions have been shown through facial expression to prove the point.

Stimson’s (1989, 2007) views representation can be based on an ideological point of view; it can be through image and verbal modes chosen by the cartoonists, a scholar or critic through verbal modes. The representation or constructing the personality means to represent the person/group values and their surroundings. The cartoonists/caricaturists represent the favoured groups, their culture, tradition and associations as “*us*” and positive while the “*others*” as negative represented, stereotyped and constructed groups. Ehrlich (1962) argues that stereotyping is a phenomenon that is based on individual beliefs and propositions of social elements/groups because of cultural and ideological differences. Macrae et al.(1996) argue that the authoritarian groups of society develop an exaggerated social behavioural fix ideology about others, constructed on their own choices, favours and differences. These groups share the same stereotypes to justify the “in-group” as positive activities to the “outer group” as negative. These stereotypes depend upon cultural values.

According to Van Dijk (1998), ideology is a system of beliefs and traditional practices, represented and expressed through discourse. Ideology does not base itself on individual beliefs, but it bases itself on socially relevant and shared knowledge of groups. The society would have a different belief system that varies from one social institution to another as death, gender, nature and organization. These groups relate ideology to the other social groups who polarize the nature of ideology as “*Us*” and “*Them*.” The polarized groups are attributed with different, but opposite characteristics. The ideology of the groups proves the interest of the groups with propositions for the opposite group. These propositions are connected with the shared knowledge through references, verbal and visual signs in the community discourses. The references and inferences are addressed to the presupposed knowledge in different ideological discourses. Van Dijk (1995, p. 24) opines that “ideologies, in general, are not wrong or right, but rather more or less effective in promoting the interests of a group.” The discourses are based on the interest of the people living in society. The ideological discourses are those discourses which underlie the ideologies and describe the structures of the ideologies. These ideological discourses are analyzed for semiotic messages, argumentation, narration and expositions related to the social groups and presupposed knowledge.

Oktar (2001) explains the relationship between society, discourse and ideology, drawing on the work of Van Dijk (1998) and preferred the three functions of language, ideational, interpersonal and textual meta-function. He derived negative *others* and positive *self*-representation in the editorials. He says that ideology is the combination of beliefs and values of the people. There are groups which judge others through their mental mirror and criteria to represent and interpret others negatively. The ideological analysis reflects "Us" as good and "Them" as bad. This reflection is the system of ideas which correlates cognition, society and discourse, and as a result, we get sociopolitical, socioeconomic and sociocultural mental discourses. Akbar and Ahmad (2014), in their study on representation through the political cartoon explored political cartoons of the daily Naw-e-Waqt (daily), a leading newspaper in Pakistan. They used Fairclough's (1992) model of critical discourse analysis and Barthes's (1974) model of Semiotics. They found that cartoons show the opposite relation between America and Pakistan. In the cartoons, Western's (American) superiority has been shown, while Muslims have been represented as dominated by America in the newspaper. The American representative is directing Pakistani representative rather than to discuss the issue. The words (nouns) have been used to pursue Pakistan, directing them for doing more. The semiotic language of the cartoons shows the supremacy of America. He views that reality lies in the mind of the creator, and a cartoon can be interpreted in many ways.

Jabeen (2016) opines that political cartoons play a significant role in ideological representation. The researcher has evaluated post 9/11 cartoons from Pakistani English newspapers as well as daily Urdu newspapers through multimodal critical discourse analysis. Jabeen has utilized Machin (2007), Van Leeuwen's framework (2008) and Fairclough's (2003) model to analyze hidden ideologies in political cartoons. The researcher states that the cartoons have been put in such a way that represent issues of the time and the hidden ideologies which is a blaming game of India to motivate the foreign countries specifically America against Pakistan. Bush has been portrayed in the cartoons as evil while Musharraf has been represented as pressurized in the situation and all cartoonists represented him negative and sluggish through linguistic and visual signs. The Indian Prime Minister has been negatively represented because he is planning against Pakistan to destabilize Pakistan.

Tehseem and Bokhari (2015) evaluated the editorial cartoons through a multimodal approach under the Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). In one of the cartoons, PTI leader, Imran Khan has been shown, looking at a pile of allegation documents smaller than a pile of evidence documents to prove his case. In another cartoon, the newspaper shows the economy of Pakistan is booming, but PTI's Dharna is a hurdle to it. 'Dharna' as a word has been written on a container and the container symbolizes the party. The PTI leader has been negatively represented and

stereotyped. The cartoonist has analyzed Pakistani newspaper's cartoons as spoiling the faces of one party while act as a savior for the other political party which shows their affiliation with the editorial cartoonists and policy of the newspaper. Through this comic portrayal, the cartoons uncover the party's politics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study includes two models for the analysis of data. The data has verbal and visual signs: the verbal signs are analyzed through Van Dijk's (1998) model of 'Ideological Square' and the visual signs are analyzed through C.S Pierce's model (EP2, p.291) of Sign (Icon, Index and Symbol).

IDEOLOGICAL SQUARE MODEL

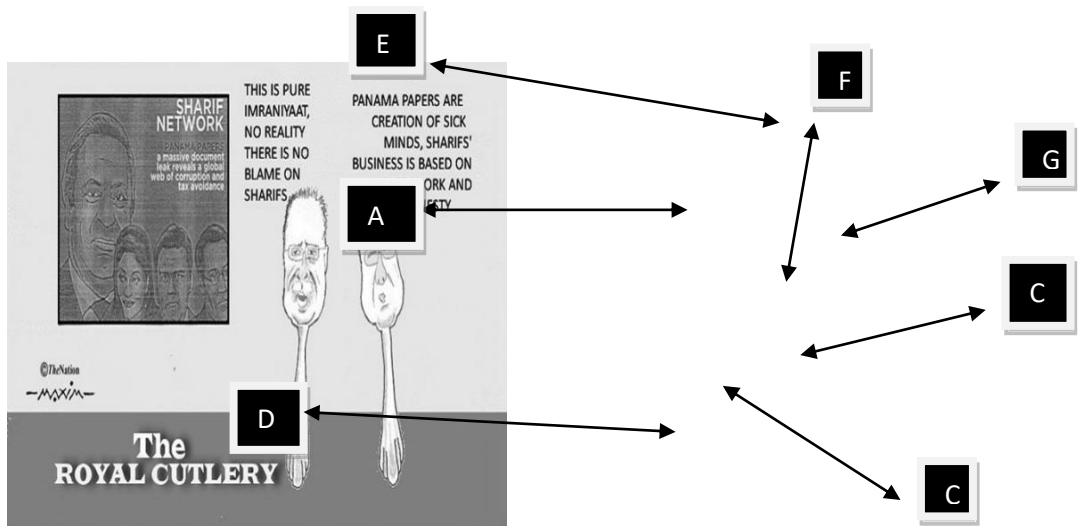
Van Dijk (1998) describes that society has been categorized in negative group (*out-group*) and positive group (*in-group*). The groups are represented in verbal discourse through ideological pronouns *Us* and *Them*. It has four strategies of deemphasizing which are applicable to multimodal semiotic discourse. The model focuses on the representational systems in the social groups. According to the model, the in-group represents themselves good and out-group as bad at all level of discourse. The in-group employs different types of resources such as rhetoric, syntactic structures, style and images to pursue people and convince the readers about the negative stereotypes of out-group.

The out-group "*Them*" is given negative attributes such as corruption, dishonesty, criminality, insecurity, inability and are described unfit for society. The negative qualities of "*Them*" are generalized, and the negative qualities of "*Us*" are marginalized. The knowledge of negative properties of the "out-group" is over-emphasized. While positive properties of the "in-group" remain incomplete and remain a part of implicit knowledge. The "*Them*" group is named with different animals to humiliate and belittle them. The "out-group" is attributed with such negative qualities that the reader may interpret the quality as inherent to "*Them*." The participants in discourse may get special focus by applying attractive techniques through stress, volume, size of the letters and image color in the discourse. The "out-groups (*Them*)" are depicted through derogated cartoons and precise terms. The lexical and syntactical structures such as word order, clause structures, phoneme, stress and repetition of negative categories of nouns, adjectives and conjunctions are employed ideologically based opinion. The false knowledge is propagated through verbal signs which are culturally acquainted in the society.

PIERCE'S MODEL OF SIGN FOR SEMIOTIC VISUAL ANALYSIS

The symbolic mode, according is that symbols/symbolic modes are the sign property or mode in which the signifier does not purely match the signified but conventional

and arbitrary idea it follows for each individual (Chandler, 2007 & Short, 2007). According to Peirce, symbol/symbolic mode is “a sign which refers to the object that it denoted by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object” (EP2, p.291). The second is iconic mode. Peirce argues that icon is a mode in which the signifier imitates the signified as feeling, tasting, cartoon, portrait and metaphors. The third is index and indexical mode which means that “a sign . . . which refers to its object not so much because of any similarity . . . nor [by association] . . . as because it is in dynamical (including spatial) connection both with the individual object, on the one hand, and with the senses or the memory of the person for whom it serves as a sign” (EP2, p.292). Liszka (1996) says that an icon has likeness because the qualities of the sign are similar to the characteristics of the object. In 1902, Peirce stated that ‘an index is a sign which would, at once, lose the character which makes it a sign if its object were removed’ (EP2, p.295).



DATA ANALYSIS

Figure 0.2 Editorial Cartoon from *The Nation*

Dated: April 6, 2016

The linguistic sign (D) “THE ROYAL CUTLERY” which is the title of the cartoon has been written in capital letter. The key words of the semiotic discourse are made attractive through style of writing and choice of words to influence minds of the readers to the conveyed message (Leach, 2005). These are the techniques for attracting readers to the ideological discourse, and trap them in the context and

make them believe in the cartoonist's stance (cited in Leach, 2005). The phrase contains a definite article "The" to stress on the constructed information in discourse under study. The adjective "Royal" refers to Nawaz Sharif family comparing him with monarch king ruling the country authoritatively. The noun "cutlery" has been used to dehumanize the followers (politicians) of PML-N. The phrase has no object; the sentence is completed through semiotic signs (images of the politicians). The cartoonist has stereotyped them as slaves to the tyrant master (Wodak, 2004).

The linguistic signs on the right side (D) "SHARIF NETWORK PANAMA PAPERS," "a massive document leak reveals a global web of corruption and tax avoidance" further explain the main title "THE ROYAL CUTLERY." The family of Nawaz Sharif has been named as a network of corruption which includes Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Hassan Nawaz and Hussain Nawaz accused in PANAMA case. The phrase refers to the underlying information about Sharif's family. The opposition and PTI's leader, Imran Khan claimed that Nawaz Sharif and his family are involved in money laundering. The idea is, further, strengthened by the artist to prepare the reader to believe firmly in the PTI leader and develop positive attitude towards the leader (Tajfel, 1979). The underlying propositions (Van Dijk, 1998) have been further elaborated that the network has earned money through illegal resources in Pakistan and transferred money to England. The underlying idea and the editorial discourse is that Nawaz Sharif's family has established off-shore companies, the money should be brought back to Pakistan. The PTI leader blamed Nawaz Sharif (PML-N) that he is not qualified as Prime Minister to lead the country. Nawaz Sharif has been represented and stereotyped for corruption by the cartoonists which verifies what (Wodak, 2004) has said that ideas of 'Other,' considering in-group better than out-group to stereotype out-group as negative and in-group as positive. Although the court at the time of the published cartoon has not decided him as corrupt. The sentence "SHARIF NETWORK PANAMA PAPERS." "a massive document leak reveals a global web of corruption and tax avoidance" is divided in different parts; "SHARIF NETWORK", "PANAMA PAPERS" and "a massive document leak reveals a global web of corruption and tax avoidance" is divided into different parts. The network is specified in the picture that includes six persons (A), (B) and (C). The whole family is criticized by using the word Sharif (pious) in the cartoon.

The word "SHARIF" follows the phrase "PANAMA PAPERS" and the phrase is further explained to the readers by adding the words "a massive document leak reveals a global web of corruption and tax avoidance" which guides the mind of the readers towards the opposition's writ in the Supreme Court against PML-N to justify PTI as true party. The cartoonist ironically understands the readers that the leader of PML-N is not a pious but dishonest political leader and a traitor.

The linguistic (verbal) signs in the image (F) "THIS IS PURE IMRANIYAATH, NO REALITY.THERE IS NO BLAME ON SHARIFS", is divided in "This is pure Imraniyaath," "No reality" and "There is no blame on Sharifs". The first phrase "This is pure Imraniyaath" is basically a collection of "this" (demonstrative pronoun), "pure", an adjective and "Imraniyaath" (noun). The phrase refers to the PTI leader, Imran Khan who has submitted case against Nawaz Sharif because of his illegal property outside the country in England registered on his children's names. Pervez Rasheed remarks that "THIS IS PURE IMRANIYAATH, NO REALITY.THERE IS NO BLAME ON SHARIFS" presupposes the idea that Nawaz Sharif and his family have no illegal property outside the country, and that Nawaz Sharif regularly pays his taxes. He is of the view that Hassan and Hussain have not transferred the money and the companies have been established through investment in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The PANAMA leaks case is a conspiracy against Nawaz Sharif. Nawaz cannot be assumed corrupt by the PTI leader, Imran Khan. He is noble and true leader of the country.

The former law minster is represented as corrupt and bad politician in the cartoon because he is saving his corrupt leader. The word Sharifs has two possible interpretations in the discourse: first, it refers to Nawaz Sharif family, and second the word 'Sharifs' refers to the concept of PML-N's politicians (Chamchas) about the innocence and piousness of their leader. Ironical the politicians are given negative attributes applying the techniques of word selection to prove them negative to the community and favor in-group political party (Tajfel, 1979)

The linguistic signs (G) "PANAMA PAPERS ARE CREATION OF SICK MINDS, SHARIFS' BUSINESS IS BASEED ON HARD WORK AND HONESTY" attached with image (C) Danial Aziz expresses the lies and baseless opinion of Danial Aziz which is a Chamcha to the Minister, according to the artist. Danial Aziz says that PANAMA leaks are baseless and Nawaz Sharif's family is not involved in money laundering and tax avoidance cases. They are true and the off-shore companies have been established through hard work and business investments which is their legal right according to international law.

The words (linguistic signs), both mentioned with image (B) and (C) are loaded with different meanings through captions (Hall, 1997; Leach, 2005).The cartoonist/policy makers of the newspaper has constructed the semiotic discourse to prove Nawaz Sharif disqualified, and his family and party members are assumed as corrupt before they are judge by legal trial in supreme court. The readers are influenced by such discourses to establish their stereotyped belief about politicians and favor the stance of PTI leader which construct the ideology of the readers based on the *in-group* ideology against *out-group* (see Van Dijk, 2002; Wodak, 2004 for more detail).

The word “IMRANIYAATH” metaphorically supports PTI leader Imran Khan as rightful and honest politician. It refers to the hatred attitude and agitation of *out-group* towards *in-group* which is spoken only to trap readers and justify Imran Khan. The two politicians (Chamchas) have been written with negative captions to expose the *out-group* negatively. Pervez Rasheed is stereotyped as a dull and dishonest man (see Wodak, 2004 for more detail) to the readers.

The cartoonist used such terms like “SHARIFS” and “ROYAL CUTLERY” “IMRANIYAATH” and “SHARIFS NETWORK” to make readers believe Pervez Rasheed and Danial Aziz as real chamchas to their leader. Imran Khan has been shown as a good person, emphasizing his good qualities and deemphasizing his bad qualities while deemphasizing Nawaz Sharif’s good quality qualities, and emphasizing Nawaz Sharif’s bad qualities (Van Dijk, 1998). The *in-group* did not mention the legal trial in the court because the cartoonist or the policy makers of the newspaper think that the information about the running trial is not important which will weaken the discourse if mentioned. The *out-group* discourse has stressed and explicitly over completed through semiotic discursive practices which validate the ideas of Tajfel (1979) and Machin (2007).

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE CARTOON

The setting of the cartoon is news’ room, where an image portrays family members; a girl and three persons in the image. The three male shown on the left side of the displayed image wear high class dress (the shirt and tie), while the girl have cultural dress, wearing dopatta (Shawl). The two male heads on the right side of the editorial cartoon have no bodies, supported by spoon handle, wearing glasses; their dress is not shown in the cartoon.

The visual signs in picture (A), have iconic resemblance with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, his daughter Mariam Nawaz, his son Hassan Nawaz and Hussain Nawaz. Indexically, the images (A) signify the four Sharif’s family members; his two sons and daughter. The displayed picture of the family members are discussed on TV channels related to panama leaks (11 million documents leaked by International consortium of investigative Generalists (ICIJ), secret accounts of rich and powerful people in Mossack Fonseca) .The images indexical and symbolical analysis presupposes the background information about the family members in the picture. These four family members have unlawful assets and secret accounts in England. They were thought to be involved in tax avoidance issues and money laundering. According to Hassan Bilal Zaidi (2016), Hussain Nawaz has been suspected for an owner of off- Shore Company; Nielsen Enterprise limited, based in British Virgin Island. Hassan Nawaz has been revealed owner of Hangan Property Holdings limited while Hussain Nawaz has been exposed owner of Nescoll Limited in British Virgin Island. Symbolically, the image (A) in the editorial cartoon connotes (Saussure, 1916), the corruption and unlawful properties abroad and money

laundering to avoid taxes. Due to the alleged charges of corruption and his children's properties, Nawaz Sahrif has been assumed morally unsuitable and inappropriate for ministership.

The person on the left side in the image (B) is Pervez Rasheed, the former Federal Minister of Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights. Iconically, the image (C) on the left side in the editorial cartoon resembles Danial Aziz who is Secretary General of Pakistan Muslim League (N) and former chairman of the National Reconstruction Bureau (NRB). Indexically, the image (B) and (C) illustrate the relationship to Sharif's family. The image (B) and (C) heads are shown with thin bodies (handle of a spoon). The iconic analysis of the images shows the politicians as cutlery to the Nawaz Sharif's family. The visual signs in the discourse (CUTLERY) refers to the presupposed knowledge about the ministers. The term Chamcha has been used by the PTI leader Imran Khan in several occasions. Indexically, the two politicians Pervez Rashid and Danial Aziz own high status in party for their cutlery qualities called in Urdu as Chamchas (persons who have no apparent qualities except flattery and earned their positions through skills of useless appreciation and support his master/leader good or bad actions without any rational thinking). The analysis assures Saussure's idea of signifier (Saussure, 1983) and denotative concept of Roland Barth (Barth, 1973; Chandler, 2007).

The two politicians defend him as good, sincere and a qualified leader for country. Symbolically, the two semiotic signs (B) and (C) refer to the corrupt politicians that support their corrupt leader for illegal money. Their heads have been metaphorically symbolizing bowl of spoon. The cartoonist has exposed them as brainless politicians that could not differentiate between faithful and unfaithful leader. The visual codes have been given meaning to serve the purpose in the discourse and represent the politicians as negative to construct the ideological implicit knowledge of the readers (Hall, 1997; Machin, 2007). Whenever the party leader (Nawaz Sharif) wishes, he uses them accordingly fit in situation.

IDEOLOGICAL AND STEREOTYPICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PAKISTANI POLITICAL ELITES

The current study investigated and answered the research question through the analysis of the editorial cartoons published in 2013 to 2017 for the employed visual and verbal signs through C. S. Pierce's system of signs and ideological square. The analysis of the cartoons shows that the cartoonist intentionally used signs and expressions to represent, stereotype and humiliate certain Pakistani politicians. The main political parties such as PML (N), PPP, MQM, PTI, and JUI and their members have been targeted and stereotyped according to the wishes of cartoonist to influence the readers. The targeted political parties and their politicians

have been called corrupt, insincere and dishonest. The cartoonist favored PTI and its politicians over the other main political parties and stereotyped them with positive implicit adjectives as sincere, honest, dutiful and faithful. The politicians, such as Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, Ishaq Dar, Maulana Fazal Rehman, Achakzai, Altaf Hussain, Asif Ali Zardari and Chudri Nisar have been stereotyped negatively.

The politicians related to the in-group, which includes even those politicians that have resigned from the main political parties, such as PML (N) and PPP, and later on, joined PTI are good, cautious, careful, responsible, competent and sincere. The politicians have been represented to the out-group parties such as Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, Ishaq Dar, Maulana Fazal Rehman, Achakzai, Altaf Hussain and Asif Ali Zardari have been stereotyped as bad, dishonest and irresponsible. It unveils the perceptions that anyone among the politician from in-group or joining in-group party and leaving out-group party is considered as true politicians (such as the cartoonists) which indicates the in-group's approach of stereotyping and representation based on biasness. The main political figures from Out-group have been stereotyped for their incompetence to rule. Different derogatory verbal signs have been used such as "Royal Cutlery" for Pervez Rashid and Danial Aziz, listening songs for the ruling party Prime Minister Mia Nawaz Sharif (looking busy doing nothing), careless about people's problems as Ishaq Dar(PML-N), progress as government for welfare of the state has been shown on print media, rather than practical services to the nation by Qaim Ali Shah (PPP), and rigging in election (Nawaz Sharif from PML-N). The out-group is represented as "Other" except PTI, and the in-group (Editorial cartoonists and the newspaper policy makers) are producing and reproducing stereotypes, which are constructed based on mental models, and ideological biasness towards out-group. The in-group experiences an individual from the group and judge the person through their own judgmental tool. They generalize the concept for the whole group to impress upon general masses to follow them and accept their stance.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The research paper aims at exploring the role of the editorial cartoon in depicting the politicians. The editorial cartoons have always played a diplomatic, dynamic and political role in circulating the information, used for easy reference and highlighting the positive and negative image of the politicians to represent and stereotype them in their own way. It builds and rebuilds the concept of the masses through semiotic visual and verbal modes. These cartoons play upon the cultural and contextual modes to assess the cultural codes and provide semiotic channels for representation and stereotyping people to achieve their desired intentions. The editorial cartoons are electrifying sources of affecting the ideas of the people.

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