

VISUAL SATIRE AS STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION: THE ROLE OF NEWSPAPER POLITICAL CARTOONS IN SHAPING PUBLIC TRUST, GOVERNANCE, AND DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT-This article examines newspaper political cartoons as a form of stakeholder communication that can shape public trust, governance discourse, and democratic accountability in developing countries. Although the initial prompt referenced peace communication, the supplied reference set centers on editorial and political cartoons; the manuscript therefore aligns its argument to that evidence base. Using a structured review of 29 recent studies published between 2020 and 2025, the article analyzes how cartoons operate as visual arguments, compress policy critique into accessible symbolic form, and circulate interpretations of leadership, crisis, corruption, elections, and public morality. The review combines descriptive mapping of the corpus with thematic synthesis. The data show three clear tendencies. First, recent scholarship is led by multimodal, semiotic, and pragmatic approaches that explain how metaphor, impoliteness, archetype, and framing make cartoons politically legible. Second, a large share of the literature comes from African, Asian, and Arab contexts, indicating that political cartoons remain significant in media systems where institutional trust is uneven and public accountability is often contested. Third, cartoons perform a dual function: they democratize critique by simplifying political complexity for broad audiences, but they may also intensify offense, cynicism, and polarization. The article argues that cartoons should be understood not as marginal humor artifacts but as newspaper-based stakeholder texts that mediate relations among journalists, citizens, political elites, and wider publics. It concludes by proposing a four-part model of visual satire as compression, accusation, translation, and circulation, and by identifying the need for stronger audience research on trust, democratic efficacy, and cross-platform uptake.

Keywords: Political cartoons; visual satire; stakeholder communication; public trust; governance; democratic accountability; developing countries

1. INTRODUCTION

Enjoying, and perhaps belittling, but usually enjoying the political cartoon as a work of a second or third class journalist, we ignore the fact that the political cartoon has a condensed interpretative and editorial function that summarizes popular evaluations, criticizes institutions and touches upon social feelings in the simplest form of a visual text. In such contexts, among the existing newspaper cultures, one may view cartoons as they help in breaking down complex political events, as well as in attributing responsibility, revealing moralistic pretensions, and creating suspense for those readers who do not read long articles. This cultural satirical practice also gains in significance in countries with low levels of literacy and diversified information sources, and where societal legitimacy is a problem. Audience-centered research on the use of editorial cartoons in Nigeria indicates how the audience may read and interpret them as a language instead of pure design (Adetola & Abioye, 2020, Adetola & Oluyi, 2020). On the other hand, studies from Kenya indicate the perception and the place of cartoons within the newspaper as a debating and governing element (Okemwa et al, 2025).

Current studies of showed that cartoons and humor provide a rich subject for analysis based on the convergence of visual rhetoric, metaphor, elaborate story compression, and strategic humorous insult. Research studies on conceptual modulation, metaphoric variation, implicitness with impoliteness, and metaphonymic turn of phrases show how the satirical cartoons nullify their force not in the line drawings of bad taste, but in the rigorous compilation of symbols, signifying units, and evaluative markers (Ali, Abderrahime, 2021a). Examination of the principles of hypoiconicity and semiotic controversies also demonstrates that visual drawing correspond to languages and are already ordered systems of symbols resulting from mutual understanding, reading, and cultural clothing (Gerion, 1995). Similarly, epistemological studies of the offensive and comic strategies conclude that the cartoons are far from being a neutral depiction of the social situation – rather, they are impactful works that alter conceptions of what is acceptable, what is fun and where politics begins and ends. (Ali and Hussain, 2023; Kyra, 2023; Sanathanan & Balakrishnan, 2023.). One of the gaps that has yet to be filled is in the articulation of political cartoons as stakeholder communication due to their exceptional properties. Existing works tend to concentrate on a single country or electoral cycle, or go as far as covering one singular crisis or individual symptoms of semiotic dysfunction, all of which are valuable, but beg the question of what happens after this. For instance, how do the cartoons published by newspapers help in reconciling the interests of the public and the media itself, as well as that of the politicians and the society in general. The reason why this is important is that while the ability of several institutions to engender public trust and guarantee democratic accountability is appreciated, trust, as well as democratic accountability does not depend on the institutions roles only, in some ways it is produced through the very interpretive practices of such institutions, on a day-to-day basis. Cartoons, for example, can influence who receives authoritative status and who fades into the background brilliantly; which person is seen as clever and which one is not; what kind of moral problem wins majority support at a given time; does the newspaper conversation cause controversy and stimulate engagement of citizens or does it lead to a more negative attitude, such as a cloud of doubt and hostility. This article will contribute to the existing body of literature by performing a systematic analysis of the corpus of user-contributed reference. The reference in question is that of the newspaper and other editorial cartoons with a special focus on peace communication as a paper's research interests shall so adjust to currently available pieces of data. The main objective is to see to what extent there is visual first-person narration in the target cartoons, aimed at governance and orientation of the society. The article posits three questions: What are the key issues in the contemporary political cartoons research? Where is stakeholders engagement via cartoons preferable to governance or trust or accountability building? How do issues change across all developing countries? The answers provided in this article enable a discussion to be made where political cartoon advertisements of newspapers assist in viewing such art forms as relations between the public and the issues being covered.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Literature Can Be Ordered About Three Overlapping Strands: Cartoons As Multimodal Political Meaning, Cartoons As Stakeholder Or Public-sphere Communication, And Cartoons As Governance Critique In Developing-country Contexts. The First One Rested Mainly On Semiotic, Pragmatic And Multimodal Analysis. Within This Set Of Works, Particular Attention Shall Be Paid To The Contribution Made By Abdel-Raheem Such As Discourses Such As Political Cartooning, While Emphasising Such As Conceptual Blending, Metaphorical Creativity, Impoliteness And Sexism, Taboos Also Particularly Important is the rationalization and explanation of the principle of Metonymic. Over the four years: 2021, 2022a, 2022b, 2023, and 2024. In contrast to such reduction, Cartoons are Better Expressed Where there is A Context on how Language and Image Maps Culture in Judgment Chu and others (2000) argue that visual language theories of representation rather liar around a hidden denotational approach to veering off production or mapping of images. The work by Chu (2022) is another case of a semiological

approach, which fails to speak about anything other than the structure of the visual product. Statements of this type question the aspects of controversy, violation, symbols but go even further and show how the Anglo-saxon cartoons carry out the political meaning wrapping it within stereotypical social patterns, oppositions and various types of presentations (Bock, 2020; Rojas-Chaves, 2022; Latchumadan & Kevin 2023). As seen in the above descriptions, stakeholder communication inevitably encompasses levels of rhetoric enhancement because it has emerged as an example of making motivation—congruence 'in an act of exchange' with the demanded behaviors. Nonetheless, the 'Wilsonian' scale of public communication or the notion of an 'information society' is, if any at all, a category of promotion.

The first strand also raises the issue of the legibility of trust oriented communication. Public trust does not generally result from something that is abstract, but emerges in the particular mode of information presentation. When state is presented cartoons directly addressing ruling class, when the leader's body is increased several times or all the details of policy are redesigned as such which appear like a monster or disguised as similar images of a ruler and a citizen in a society, sometimes prose, although logically breaking down checks and balances, is unable to perform this particular function. This is why we regard the use of metaphor or archetype as an institution. It is about organization and power. The interests of crisis cleavages are present in that it renders it possible to focus attention and manage crisis, engage in attribution in an event of crisis, and take pity on oneself from remembering evaluative frames following the cessation of exposure to a crisis event (Graham & Gollatt, 2022; Hahn, 2022). Artimes and Haroun (2024) and Deata (1994) further state that it is important that such criticism focuses on issues that need correcting rather than offending people. In this context, the argument of Ali and Mohammed (2023) can be visualized as another claim. That is what offered by important points. Host Leo Vancon, producer of the film *A Light Bulb*, puts forward an explanation of these terms in an interview. Hanan Salah (2012) opines that self-censorship "was the major spins debate" in the aftermath of the Ottoman provision, inviting a French ruling elite to govern Egypt due to the sick condition of the Khedive. Eser Al, Mustafa Kabakçı and Seçil Benarda almost show the attitude of sociologically positive, that is categorically negative, patterns of attractiveness and touch citing textbook – all these give food for thought. However, the cause of Sir Tim's blind rage is not that any of the problems that are "embedded" were addressed.

"It is the emotions of each of us that precedes their logical interpretation, in contrast to what we are taught in morning temperance." An incorrect interpretation of the activity of governmental bodies and presence of the so-called public services may be an obstacle. Wycliffe has maintained that a change in the language of the New Testament and Exodus would be counterproductive, thus, there was no need for such alterations. Thus Marks says: "Despite the removal of the training requirements, the acceleration drafting has not been achieved.

Another approach towards editorial cartoons would be in the view that they can serve as effective communication tools and be beneficial even to journalism. In addition, a study conducted on the Nigerian audience indicates that readers understand and use editorial loudness as a mediated communication of meaning and support that helps us make sense of the public implications (Adetola & Abioye 2020; Adetola & Oluyi 2020). Some historical investigations of black newspapers also point to the vital role of cartoons in initiating a single public: It turns out that cartoon can draw a public for certain newspapers and thus unite a particular society in discourse (Guzman & Moore, 2023). In specific focus on cartoons within journalistic studies, who highlight the role of cartoons by boundaries, the objective of the present article is greatly achieved; that is to hunter on the skill of cartoons making two – professional and the public engage without a polarity. The cartoon acquires different functions in social and geographical space: it can be an artistic work, a critic of certain actions or phenomena in the society, a way to make the newspaper well known in the market, a mechanism for expressing civic opinion, and a tool for memorizing public events and social restoration. Similarly, Okemwa et al. (2025) investigate cartoons as organizing devices in Kenya's newspapers and there is a clear illustration of what is a state of cartoon discussion most likely illustrating issues achieved to highest importance. Bowie's (2023) discussion on comic framing concerning the upheaval with Ramaphosa turns the argument in its head by adopting a more of how cartoons can frame some lines of political responses as normal and others as exceptions urging acquiescence or skeptical or ironic support towards them.

However, this second issue also denotes a divergence. It is true that political cartoons can enhance the understandability of politics and support the processes of democratic oversight, but at the same time, it must also be noted that they do foster oversimplification. In particular, the very economic vision of voice afforded to political cartoons might foster a tendency for the attribution of the reasons of failures or depiction of the enemies in simplistic way. Perlstein et al. (1973), analyzing editorial cartoons on vaccination by the newspapers of Canada, for example, illustrates the contrasts between these two outcomes. This is important due to the facts that it shows how these types of images can reflect and influence societal reactions not only in terms of the formal attitudes. This kind of confidence is affected by passion. Criticisms can be governed in such a way that they are appreciated in the form of cartoons, but they can as well culminate into a channel of as it is referred one as public venom. The third hypothesis has relevance to countries that are emerging and those embracing democratic principles. Herein, it is argued that the extensive literature on cartoons displays a trend where appeals are always made for these items around the time of elections, during periods of democratic recession, around issues of political inheritance, amidst struggles with corruption, and definitely so, during periods of crisis. In Nigeria, an analysis of cartoons of political leaders during election periods and previous study of cartoons during COVID-19 pandemic show how hostility/anger, fear and the failure of leadership are remediated through public health education (Jolaoso & Shojonwo, 2023; Olajimbiti & Jolaoso, 2024). In the case of the Philippines, editorial cartoons have worked to constitute and counterpolitical myths and images, that is, the claims of electoral and political disputes arise and are answered through active problematizing by cartoons while alluding the idea of passive spectating or mere verbal criticism (Mangila, 2021; Nares & Montaña, 2022; Padillo & Serote, 2023). Furthermore, in Pakistan and Indonesia, there are common perspectives regarding the role of cartoons in addressing ongoing political problems and the practices of power politics. Cartoons implicitly contest imposing visions, enable citizens to see apparatuses of power working from the inside, and present personal or communal values as bases of conflict (Maryum, 2023; Prabowo et al., 2025)]. In the context of Africa and the Arab world such governance is much more complex. Lusekelo (2023) has looked into how the COVID-19 Pandemic is portrayed in the political cartoons of Tanzania. Kodabux (2024) however, has shown how comedy news in Mauritius has been localized through a post colonial translation perspective. While some of the studies of political cartoons look at some aspects of almost all countries, for example Nairi's (2024) analysis of democratic backsliding in Tunisia seems to be particularly serious because it demonstrates that even innocent cartoons can be used to point out the erosion of a society. Rather than just focusing on the democratic decline as an outcome of the change in a government's policies, the power of the cartoons is that they are able to present the changes at a given period within the society through the stories and actions of those living in that society. Conflict and gendered inequality studies in the middle east by Abdel-Raheem (2014) and Elhosary & Elkishif (2015) on The Gaza Wars Cartoons involves these discussions and what does and does not transport through these highly contested fields of visual media, grievance, and identity, outrage, and critique (Abdel-Raheem, 2013, 2014; Elhosary & Elkishif, 2015). From the above, it can be understood that cartoons are neither immediate play nor a single piece of work with certain results. They encompass adaptable items of communication at the borderlines of journalism, public argumentation, satire, and ideological competition. Yet this versatility is not fully exploited as the studies of specific cases overtake the development of a single perspective on the role of cartoons and other tools of stakeholder management in facilitating corporate reputation. Most works investigate a particular semiotic strategy in conflict or political interventionist cartooning; less examine the oppositional principles and how they supervise the relations between the various sections of the state, the audience, and the newspaper organisation. Tackling this lacuna the present analysis posits cartoons as stakeholder material understanding the notion as a link between the epistemic spaces of the representative, resident, and representative democracy and issues of disclosure and factualness in communication.

3. METHODOLOGY

An investigation was conducted, which involved a structured qualitative review of examination of documents and descriptive corpus. The corpus under review comprises 29 full bibliographical citations that the user incorporated in the given citation file. Initially sixty references were to be sought, but the file loaded with 29 records available for analysis and all 29 were included within it. As a full list of all citations instead of papers was used, the Review tended to be underdone intentionally. It analyzes each study at the citation and title level and bases the resultant synthesis on the topics being discussed through the titles, sources, dates etc. The goal is not to assert at each article level results which cannot be read from the list of sources but to analyze the tendencies in the literature thus far, and to develop models based on this evidenced.

There were four aspects to the coding strategy. The first aspect perused the date of publication of recoded entries to test field expansion over time. The second aspect focused on regional and contextual coding such as Africa, Asia, MENA, Global North, or cross-context/theoretical and at times, keywords attached to the articles. Context was determined only when the article contained clear context in the title or in the preamble of the article and in cases where the contexts were less apparent the paper was classified as cross-context/theoretical. The third aspect was the identification of an article’s dominant discourse by its mean constituents. Several topics appeared after the first look into the title of a paper – semiotic or pragmatic multimodality, governance or elections or accountability, crisis or conflict or health, audience or public engagement, journalism field or boundary work, and postcolonial translation, etc. Fourth, matters in the corpus were understood via a prism of stakeholders’ relation, as a question was asked of what relational pathways each paper seemed to emphasise: media and its audience, citizens and leadership, different publics and organizations, tabloid and transnational publics. Next up, it is time to get technical. The next thing is to count the clusters distribution. These clusters related to the format and method of public trust towards the national system of government will then be interrogated in small ways, rubric by rubric. To say the least this kind of study is more of a content analysis of publications rather than a full book review. This is more appropriate for this purpose as it is required to write a narrative interclusion typical of a diary, from a limited range of relevant literature. Also, so, there is what one can term as a fit between the method and the available facts and evidence. Instead of an excessive confidence of claim, a very clear structure to inform the relationship between the cited material and the contentions put forward in the paper is made.

Data Analysis

The dominant mode of research is chronological. Based on a competitive critique of the literature, the availability of research for 2023 is very high – with over one third of all studies corresponding to the period of 11 months only. This leap probably occurs for such reasons such as a social study booming in digital distribution, jokes about the coronavirus, and the resurgent interest in the analysis of the political aspects of visual satire in divided societies. Hitherto available reports in the years 2020 and 2021 outline the understanding of potential recipient and the media system as well as cepted stock oriented theory of semiotics analysis (Adetola & Abioye, 2020; Adetola & Oluyi, 2020; Imperial, 2020; Abdel-Raheem, 2021; Mangila, 2021). In 2022 and beyond, the dimension not only broadens but also becomes more insidious, the main thematic political issues being the elections, a public emergency, a perverse democracy, the struggles to control journalism and the push for conflict reportages thus the issue of viral communication seen within conflict (Mielczarek, 2022; Nares and Montaña, 2022; Abdel-Raheem, 2022a, 2022b; Nairi, 2024; Brookes et al., 2025; Elhosary & Elkashif, 2025).

In a different perspective, the second domain deals with geography. Figure 2 shows us that many research studies involve countries that are in the category of developed countries. Out of nine research studies/ cases, eight of them are African, six of them are Asian and the other seven come from the MENA region. On the contrary, there are only four comparative studies involving developed countries. Among them, four can also be regarded as tests and trials. This is significant because it casts doubts on the suggestion that most work in political cartoon research is infiltrated by the Western media systems. It is the opposite. The corpora in bulk suggests that some of the more active assignments focus more than others on countries where there are high levels of attention given to questions around political legitimacy, freedom of the media and democratic accountability. Local studies from Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritius, Tunisia, The Philippines, Pakistan, Indonesia, China and the Context Arabs show that cartoons are particularly relevant in contexts where Stoller observed politics is not only ubiquitous but also structurally enigmatic (Jolaoso & Shojonwo, 2023; Kodabux, 2024; Lusekelo, 2023; Okemwa et al., 2025; Maryum, 2023; Prabowo et al., 2025). When looking at thematic concentration as a category, the largest concentration occurs in semiotic and pragmatic multimodality, with the second largest being in governance and electoral accountability, as seen in Figure 3 above. This allocation implies that the field is still doing well in relation to signification and interpretation. This is perceived from where many scholars think that they want to understand cartoons as the sign systems. They look into, metaphor, conceptual integration, othering, old scripts, jokes, and inserting the idea of a devil (Nkoji, 2021; Nkoji, 2022a; Nkoji, 2022b; Wolff, 2024, Chu, 2022; Monforte, 2022; Sanathanan & Balakrishnan, 2023) . Attention to the elections, leadership, public discourse and decline in democracy is the next in size, which also points political consequence extractable from the cartooning theory (Bowie et al., 2023; Jolaoso and Shojonwo, 2023; Nares et al., 2022; Nairi, 2024; Padillo and Serote, 2023; Prabowo et al., 2025).(105406)Two secondary themes of crisis communication and public engagement, which are non the less extremely vital, appear to be the most frequent. This concern only major uses of cartoons that represent apocalyptic vision on the pandemic, disillusionment with vaccines, war, and social disarray (Chu, 2023; Lusekelo, 2023; Olajimbiti & Jolaoso, 2024; Pelletier et al., 2023; Elhosary & Elkashif, 2025). In contrast, audience-oriented research asserts that cartoons possess value due to the fact that publics engage with the medium by reading, using, sharing, remembering it rather than being passive (only for researchers as is seen within Adetola & Abioye, 2020; Adetola & Oluyi, 2020; Guzman & Moore, 2023; Okemwa et al., 2025). This substantive area is also developed in the work by Brookes et al. (2025) and Kodabux (2024) which examines the professional and marketing aspects of a cartoon and opportan news dissemination practices including the critique of newsworthiness of cartoons in a broader societal interactional context reinforcing this notion.

Table 1 encapsulates the review corpus per year, region and main topic. The table 2 converts these establishments into a model of communication with the stakeholders. The extant mapping suggests that the cartoons interfere in four levels of activities simultaneously. On one level, they are designed to speak to citizens by simplifying the complexities of politics. On another, they target the egos of elites, satirically placing blame on them for various actions done. On yet another, they appeal to the papers, as they indicate the editorial policy of the paper, as well as the identity of the institution. On the last, they appeal to general populations through the channels of reader engagement, changes and adoption of stories and emotions. Put differently, the corpus encourages the approach of viewing a cartoon as anything except a peripheral part of journalism, rather, it should be regarded as a condensed spot where intermediation, appraisal and public reason collide with one another.

Dimension	Category	n
Region	Africa	8
Region	MENA	7
Region	Asia	6
Region	Global North	4
Region	Cross-context/theoretical	4
Theme	Semiotic/pragmatic multimodality	10
Theme	Governance/elections/accountability	8
Theme	Crisis/conflict/health	5
Theme	Audience/public engagement	4
Theme	Journalism field/boundary work	1
Theme	Postcolonial/translation	1

Table 1: Review corpus profile by region and dominant theme

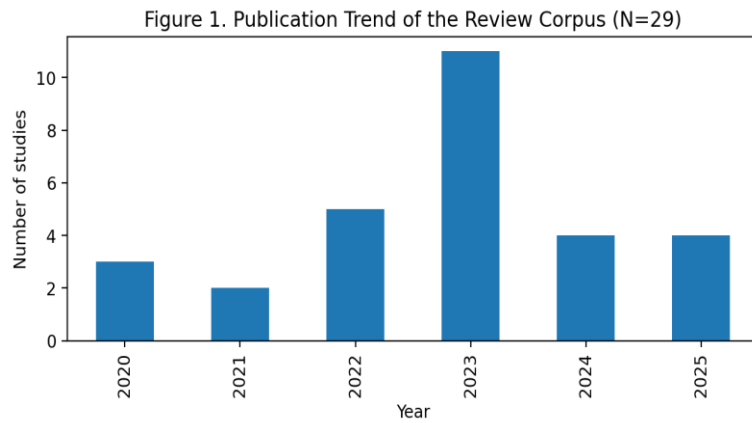


Figure 1. Publication trend of the review corpus (N = 29).

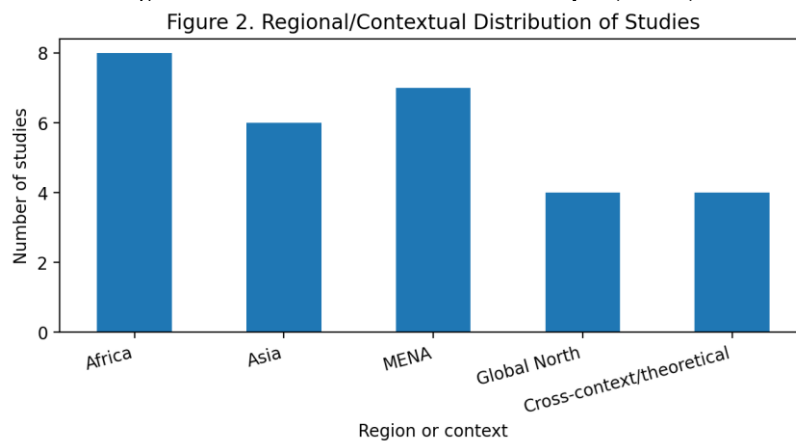


Figure 2. Regional/contextual distribution of studies.

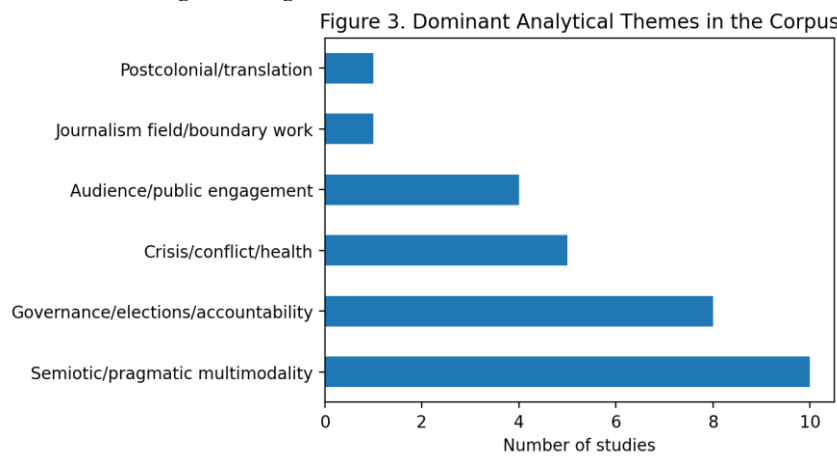


Figure 3. Dominant analytical themes in the corpus.

Function	Communication role	Indicative studies
Compression	Packages complex political events into memorable visual judgments that are quickly legible to broad publics.	Abdel-Raheem (2021, 2022a, 2022b); Chu (2022); Imperial (2020)
Accusation	Assigns moral and political responsibility to leaders, parties, or institutions through ridicule, archetype, and framing.	Bowie (2023); Jolaoso & Shojonwo (2023); Nairi (2024); Prabowo et al. (2025)
Translation	Converts elite or technical issues into culturally local and emotionally resonant public meanings across audiences.	Kodabux (2024); Chu (2023); Lusekelo (2023); Olajimbiti & Jolaoso (2024)
Circulation	Moves beyond the printed page into public discourse, institutional memory, and digital recirculation.	Guzman & Moore (2023); Okemwa et al. (2025); Brookes et al. (2025); Elhosary & Elkashif (2025)

Table 2: Stakeholder communication functions of newspaper political cartoons

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis delivers four central assemblages. Firstly, political caricatures found in newspapers are considered instrumental in communication. And the caricatures are considered to be an important aspect of flattening the political discussions where competition of policy, internal dissimilarity, leadership-related issues, and institutional incompatibilities in most cases articulated in words are all translated into images which can be seen in a short time and perceived fully as not shallow e.g. De Lannoy, 1997; Wittelstein, 1999. The presence of semiotic and multimodal studies in large amounts in the the corpus is a sign that most scholars consider the importance of what is called compression in cartoons (Beavan, 2021; Abdel-Raheem, 2021, 2022a, 2022b; Chu, 2022; Imperial, 2020). Also, stakeholders find products of compression important

for communication as it opens the political analysis possibilities to the extent that people who do follow the politics reporting in all processes immediately come up with – who did what to whom, and why it is important. This is why audience-oriented Nigerian researchers assert that cartoons are tools of communication and not pieces of art (Obidienzo & Akintunde, 2020; Obidienzo & Akintunde, 2020).

Also, political cartoons have provocative content. They help newspapers and cartoonist to place a blame on the leaders or institution and most importantly no one would be blamed since cartoons have such defined and flexible content. This can be well perceived in discourse on elections, power succession and political decay (Fosudo and Ajayi 2023; Karim 2023; Naghizadeh 2024; Prabowo et al. 2025). Even in such a case, a cartoon can imply that the leader is ridiculous, rapacious, imbecilic, dictatorial, or totally separate from the ordinary people. The work of Bowie (2023) on discursive sleight of hand in the form of cartoons and the associated illustrations of political groups confirms this – the accusation of rule of particular person is not mere. It is a ‘there is a crowded shape inside’ accusation (Bowie, 2023; Mielczarek, 2022). In relation to this, it can be argued that cartoons are within the range of inexpensive devices that help in the provision of public accountability in cases when corrective toolbars are congestive, monopolistic, or frankly impenetrable. Next, publics are also addressed through cartoons. More importantly, when talking about Mauritius, cartoons may be also used in the form of native useless social – emancipating. Therefore, this translation is referred to in a much larger sense, rather than in its linguistic form. In terms of popular and public culture, it is referred to a wider process of the transformation of the social as a select cultural practice. The function of editorial cartoons in a newspaper can be seen to translate obscure or foreign-enough-for-the-person-looking-at-them-to-comprehend issues into a concretely imaginable local scenario, which is centered on them as the actors, wherever they may be located. The comparative drawings on COVID-19 studies authored in China, Tanzania, Nigeria and Canada do not compete in terms of their use of the translation function since the outbreak of the pandemic required rapid sense-making on the part of the general public in the different regions under conditions of panic, confusion and overwhelming information flow and thus high rates of stigma. This is why such studies are not considered in vain (see Chu, 2023; Lusekelo, 2023; Olajimbiti & Jolaoso, 2024; Pelletier et al., 2023). This is further accentuated by the framing of a conflict in feminist discourse, with particular reference to Gaza in this analysis pictorial and sociopolitical moves help such a conflict narrative move from lateral into vertical sections of society (Elhosary & Elkashif, 2025). This is how translation forms a connection between cartoons and the audience also forming public trust: it enables the presentation of the economic aspects of the institute and the institution itself in a better more favorable way but at the same time makes diseases ill suits credibility if triumph of such a fram occurs too much. Furthermore, it could be argued with confidence that cartoons that have so much significance, that goes beyond the actual content in the publications placed would be classified as that of literary fiction and comprise written draw, art draw and finishes and periodicals (Guzman & Moore, 2013; Okemwa et al., 2014; Brookes et al., 2014; Elhosary & Elkashif, 2014). However their utilization in certain context and the special attention of the strategies employed in them and including the discussion of aesthetic categories may determine the exact preferences that the Gray family will develop after having read one of these tales (Anderson 2002). This is because political cartoons necessitate that they be considered past their date of publication and in the context of history, as not even the most refined interpretative skills can always get the consumer to the position of the intended comprehension and appreciation of a given artwork or object. The news media cartoon starts as an optimization project but, its adhesiveness for some networks and the status of a legal document it might undertake other methods of display like school courses, social media involvements, partisan claims and never ending memory. This narcissistic expansion of the circulation provides more evidence that cartoons should be defined as a type of investigate communication. Their target groups are diverse, their composition bears relevance, and most importantly, their regional associations matter.

The above findings are consistent with conceptualizing visual humor as aimed at the stakeholders serving the purpose of its graphic compression, stylistic accusation, linguistic translation, and the distribution pattern. Compression can be useful in elucidating why political cartoons do not avoid the problems of political discourse and go beyond them. Accusation deals with moral dynamics and allots references to blames where they should fall. Translation as a phenomenon characterizes the continuum of elite modes of communication and those available to the general public. Circulation explains how cartoons might have an impact lasting beyond As their release as news sources. Taken altogether, these roles are useful in understanding the importance of cartoons in public trust or democratic accountability within emerging democracies. In cases where institutions are discouraged, cartoons can act not only to bring attention but also to articulate democratic processes. In limitations of professional journalism, cartoons can provide a way to mitigate the critique of media. In spite of segmentation, cartoons can help to provide uniform self-identifying principles. However, this discussion not only enhances the existing knowledge but also suggests some restrictions in the analysis. The incorporation of comic shows does not always better the democratic culture. The academic works about offense, sexism, taboo, and rudeness tell us that any piece of humor can sometimes perpetuate negative social orders while criticizing power (Abdel-Raheem, 2023, 2024; Sanathanan & Balakrishnan, 2023). The sequence from hope towards disappointment due to vaccination images is a good example to show that people’s faith isn’t an unchangeable parameter – it can decrease as well as increase (Pelletier et al., 2023). Consequently, it is not enough merely to mention the existence of comics. It is also relevant to inquire in what way they deal with problems, who among people’s claims are presented, and whether they promote critical thinking or just resort to derision. The review mentions three research gaps that require further study. The first issue of concern is the lack of academic research devoted to a direct examination of audiences on the issue of trust. While attention has been focused on acknowledgment, use of a media form, agenda balance, or benefits towards enhancement of the public sphere, few papers appear to consider the impact of continuous viewing of political cartoons on trust in newspapers, state apparatuses, and participation in mobility through different degrees of time and the influence of political cartoons on trust and political participation over time in newspapers or agencies of the state (Humphreys, Viviane, and Joel, 2020; Akubuiro, Rowland, and Ifeoma, 2020; Omondi, Mary, Peter and Warigia, 2025; Guzman, Dana, and Martin, 2023). The second deficiency is a methodological one in semiotic as opposed to mixed-method or longitudinal design. The third gap is that of a platform. A number of articles suggest circulation beyond the print format, but there is a need to study the transition from the newspaper to the digital form more closely, in particular in the underdeveloped countries, where other media such as WhatsApp, Facebook or platform screenshots can drastically expand the audience in a cartoon and reframe the cartoon context very differently. Most recently, the results imply that there is a need for inclusion of political comics into media and democracy studies. They are located in the middle of the compilation of an editorial position, the masses’ perception and institutional evaluation. In newspaper operation, their role is to assist in converting political controversies into social decisions. Hence, this lends them a rather opposition support role notwithstanding the comical nature of the texts. These are not just negative humor, but are very instrumental texts in political discourse.

5. CONCLUSION

The argument has been raised in the article that political cartoons from newspapers as the examples of stakeholder communication, are very important in terms of the impact on public confidence and for the process of governance and accountability especially in developing countries. A detailed examination of 29 studies that were reviewed will rather show that the previous investigations are of a complex nature both in terms of geography and theory. It is broad in scope because most of these new studies are situated in geographical areas such as Africa, Asia, and Arab regions rather than the accustomed analysis on the particular western news ecosystem. It is focused because these include five themes beyond the sheer description of the newspapers - multimodal aspects of meaning, aspects of elections and governance, aspects of continuity and crisis, all in relation to public communication.

The review a four-part model of cartoon communication as compression, accusation, translation, and circulation. This model helps make clear why the power of editorial cartoons remain intact within and outside newspaper realms. They compress complex events into memorable images, accuse institutions and leaders using sarcasm, translate elite politics into public meaning and critical evaluation, and circulate and portable symbolic criticisms across audiences. It is these features that allow cartoons contribute towards democratic accountability, especially in areas where the public cannot trust and consume institutions since it emerges as opaque, yet must still be accessed for scrutiny.

In addition, the text mentions that the cartoon's media value in the democratic society is not automatic, on the contrary, it is quite situational. On one hand, images critique is capable of contributing the development of the critical citizens, but on another one, the critique can lead to solving the problems in norms exercise, healthy simplifications, and preferences for politics. Further studies should undertake analysis of the practice of semiotics and its methodologies together with analysis of the practical implications of political cartoons in relation to specific audiences, spectacle studies, and social class as well as the intersection of comedy, history and other forms of beautiful literary scholarship. If such works are performed, political cartoons may be followed in the fields of journalism, propaganda and the discourse on democracy. Rather than being relegated to the periphery of the page of the newspaper, they are located relatively close to the centre of sociological discussions on power, governance, and accountability.

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