Interplay of Linguistic and Semiotic Choices in Shaping Meaning: A Critical Analysis of Political Cartoon in Pakistani English Newspaper

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ABSTRACT:

In today's world, where nations are interconnected through media, the analysis of media discourse from different perspectives on societal issues has gained much currency. The present study analyzes the satirical representation of a newspaper cartoon to find out how these media persons utilize cartoons and the accompanying linguistic choices to affect readers' opinions and understandings. Guided by qualitative research methodology, the data for this study is collected in the form of one cartoon selected through purposive sampling from a Pakistani English newspaper i.e., Dawn. Taking insights from Barthes's (1957) theory of semiotics and Fairclough's (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model, the study utilizes an integrated framework for a fine-grain analysis of cartoon discourse. The intermingling of these two models of analysis has helped the researchers to highlight how newspaper cartoon discourse can be utilized to construct and highlight certain ideologies. The selected cartoon under the caption "OIC seeks global intervention to halt Gaza genocide," highlights the themes of victimization and powerlessness. By utilizing the signs of a man and a wooden log for the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) and Gaza, respectively, the cartoonist has evoked feelings of sympathy for the innocent killing of Palestinians. Hence, the study has found a logical connection between linguistic and semiotic systems to highlight the OIC's inefficacy and the world's indifference and hypocritical response towards the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

KEYWORDS:

Political Cartoon, Gaza, OIC, CDA, Semiotic Analysis, Pakistani English Newspaper

Introduction

In today's digital world, the communication of ideologies through verbal and non-verbal, i.e., graphic features, has gained much currency. The presentation of harsh and bitter realities through satirical cartoon images accompanying linguistic messages is a very significant aspect of newspapers, and the analysis of such discourse has grabbed the attention of several researchers. Cartoons as a signalling tool to communicate political, legal, economic, social and global issues have been in vogue from ancient times to the present day. Initially, the word cartoon was first used in Italy for the material on which a drawing was made, but later, the word "drawing" was used for this specific art.

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However, with the passage of time, the term cartoon was associated with the meaning of a comic drawing, a series of drawings, or animation. The very first animated "film" was made by a French cartoonist named Émile Cohl. He is often seen as the father of animation because of his 1908 film Fantasmagoria, which features a playful cast of hand-drawn characters that are up to no good.

Other than for entertainment purposes, the cartoons associated with political domains have been functioning to highlight certain social and political issues. By providing brief but clever and humorous images, these cartoons grab the attention of their viewers. From within different types of cartoons, political cartoons are satirical media that criticize any political person, institution, or issue in a satirical way. Hence, a political cartoon is a subjective observation of a political matter (Mateus, 2016). According to Willett and Singer (1993), the first political cartoon appeared in Egypt around 1360 B.C. These political cartoons have been used to criticize many government officials in Egypt (Moyle, 2004). These political cartoons appearing in newspapers are sketches or comic strips that carry a political or social agenda, which, according to Howard and Hoffman (2013), simplify the complex political situation and help the readers understand current events. According to Bormann et al. (1978), these political cartoons are characterized by humour with a setting of political agenda. Hence, such cartoons serve several purposes, including the expression of different opinions, the creation of precise knowledge about a particular phenomenon or issue and the highlighting of the socio-political issues of any society.

Cartooning discourse, especially in newspapers and magazines, contributes well to communicating some key and serious socio-political issues in a non-serious, lighter and funnier but satirical tone. The language in the form of a tagline or a simple comment used with these cartoons is the best mode to propagate a particular ideology for public perception. While commenting upon the language used in the press, Kress (1985, 1996) asserts that this language is a matter of choice and not chance. According to Wodak (1999), language is a social semiotics where public perception is shaped through print media of images i.e., written and visual discourse. Discourse, according to Fairclough (1995), is a social practice. To understand media discourse, Barthes (1957) propounded his theory of semiotics for understanding media language. He contends that semiotics is culturally oriented with multiple interpretations. These drawings are a powerful medium to describe the whole story of the current situation by depicting one image with few written words.

In recent decades, cartoons with few written words have become a well-established field to make the audience think critically. Cartoonists themselves do not comment on an issue, whether it is right or wrong; they just hit and run, leaving the audience to think about any issue. The cartooning rhetoric consists of more than words. It is a complex system of symbols, pictures, and words that are put together to make it exaggerated with the intention of highlighting the issue and making the readers and viewers think critically. According to Lent (2000), peculiar background knowledge and analytical skills are needed to comprehend the message of cartoons.

Drawing on insights from Barthes's (1957) theory of semiotics and Fairclough's (1995) CDA model, the present study researchers are interested in exploring the role of Pakistani print media in the wake of the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. For this purpose, only one editorial cartoon highlighting this specific issue has been selected from Dawn, a well-reputed Pakistani English newspaper. The present study has set the following research questions:

1. How does the cartoonist represent sociopolitical issues in the Pakistani English newspaper *Dawn*?
2. How are the desired ideologies conveyed to the target audience by intermingling the linguistic and non-linguistic signs in selected cartoons appearing in the Pakistani English newspaper *Dawn?*

Review of Related Literature

Communication is done to communicate certain messages and ideologies, and it is done mostly through two modes

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i.e., verbal communication and non-verbal communication (Arshad, Anwar, & Shoaib, 2024b). Verbal communication is done using a particular language either in spoken or written mode (Arshad, Anwar, & Shoaib, 2024a). Non-verbal communication, on the other hand, is done through several modes other than the use of the sign system of a language (Anwar, Shoaib, Zaman, & Arshad, 2024). This communication can be done through pictures, drawings, body movements, and gestures (Anwar, Shoaib, & Shahid, 2024). Decoding the message coded through any mode of communication depends upon the knowledge and expertise of the receiver of these messages, for which they need both linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge (Shoaib, Rasool, Anwar, & Ali, 2023). The analysis and interpretation of any message communicated through any mode of discourse also depend on its use in a particular context and situation (Shoaib, Anwar, & Mustafa, 2022; Shoaib, Anwar, & Rasool, 2022).

From within different types of discourses, cartoons, the focus of the present study, are a type of drawing which are intended to criticize any idea, policy or person in a satirical and humorous way (Mariam, Anwar, & Shoaib, 2022). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines a cartoon as "an amusing drawing in a newspaper or magazine, especially one about politics or events in the news". The concept of the cartoon is basically associated with the Middle Ages, where it was defined as "a preliminary drawing for a piece of art, such as a painting, fresco, tapestry, or any other painting medium". However, the meanings associated with cartoons and the purposes these served changed with the passage of time. For example, in the 19th century, cartoons were considered to refer to comical pictures in periodicals and newspapers. However, in the early 20th century, printed cartoons were associated with animated films. The use of political cartoons was initially recorded in Egyptian culture (Singer & Willett, 1993).

In the scenario of the interconnected and interdependent world of today (Shoaib, Ali, Anwar, & Abdullah, 2022), the media plays an important role in conveying (Anwar, Shoaib, & Mustafa, 2022), shaping and moulding the thought patterns and ideologies of people living in this global village (Shoaib, Rasool, & Anwar, 2021). The use of cartooning sign systems in newspaper media with few written words has become a well-established field in discourse studies (Shoaib, Ali, Anwar, & Shaukat, 2021). Editorial cartoons, particularly political cartoons, are graphics that caricature any public figure or part where the editorial cartoonist shares his own opinion on some political or social issue. Drawing these sketches, the form of cartoons with certain captions requires an artistic skill with a deep knowledge of satire, irony, hyperbole and symbolism to highlight the malpractices and criticize the culprits in a humorous way (Mariam, Anwar, Shoaib, & Rasool, 2021; Shoaib, Ali, Anwar, Rasool, et al., 2021). The cartoonists criticize social issues and political malpractices through their cartoons to make the public aware of these bad practices. Focused elements in newspaper cartoons often highlight specific themes or messages, typically using a combination of visual and textual techniques. Very often, ideology refers to a set of beliefs or opinions of a particular group or an individual. It is also a set of cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes that underline and justify either the status quo or movements to change it. Cartoonist sometimes draws stereotypical drawings to portray fixed ideas or images that people have of a particular type of person or thing in a particular society or culture. These media use symbols to convey indirect meanings to their viewers, who interpret these symbols with the help of their sound knowledge of a particular situation and its background. Other than using symbols, cartoonists often use analogies to communicate complex ideas in a simple way, where they draw a comparison between two unlike things that convey a deep meaning. Furthermore, the cartoonists represent social and political issues by capturing the minds of the audience through satire as well. Hence, they criticize in the guise of humour and satire while utilizing these stereotypical sketches to address political and social issues. Hence, the editorial cartoons express the viewpoint of a cartoonist.

In recent decades, the cartooning sign system has become a well-established field in Pakistani print media to make the audience analyze such types of pictures deeply and think profoundly (Anwar, Shoaib, & Zahra, 2021). Cartoonists themselves do not comment on an issue that is right or wrong; they just hit and run, leaving the audience

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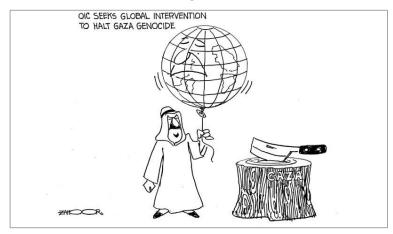
to think deeply with the intention of bringing a change. Several researchers from diverse fields of linguistics, journalism and media communication have analyzed political cartoons and caricatures from different angles. For example, Sani et al. (2012), in their study of Nigerian political cartoons, found that the sign system used in these discourses has connotative and persuasive elements that convey a particular ideology. Another study was carried out by Mwetulundila and Kangira (2012), which investigated Dudley's political cartoons to find out how rhetoric and humour are combined to convey ideology. Likewise, El-Falaky's (2019) study also highlighted how editorial cartoons use visual signs to reveal the political and social upheaval prevalent at a particular time in Egypt. American media cartoons have been analyzed by Rehman (2018) who tried to find out how this media is used to portray an undesirable picture of Muslims after the incident of 9/11. Furthermore, (Kadhim & Abbas, 2023) have analyzed cartoon films to find out the workings of racist discourse in such discourses by taking insights from critical discourse analysis.

Pakistan's print media plays a role in shaping perceptions of different political and global issues through semiotic discourse. Pakistani newspaper cartoons have been analyzed by different researchers like Shaikh et al. (2013), Ashfaq and Hussein (2014), Hussain and Li (2016), Waqar et al. (2020) and Tahir et al. (2022). Utilizing different research methods, these researchers have analyzed how these political cartoons convey the social and political agenda of the producers.

Research Methodology

The current study follows qualitative research, which, according to Nunan (1992), works at two levels. Firstly, it offers in-depth knowledge of subjects, and secondly, it helps researchers explore and identify new aspects and themes based on an in-depth analysis of the data. The data is collected in the form of political cartoons based on purposive sampling. Two aspects of good research, i.e., relevancy and recency, were considered while selecting the cartoon. Only one political cartoon related to the ongoing international issue, i.e., the Israel-Palestine conflict, has been chosen to carry out a fine-grain analysis to see how the cartoonist conveys the desired meanings through carton discourse. The targeted data has been collected from a well-established and widely read Pakistani English newspaper "Dawn". This newspaper has been selected because it covers both national and international issues related to society and politics. Moreover, this newspaper publishes political cartoons on a daily basis with a maximum readership from the middle and elite classes. Only one political cartoon by Pakistani famous cartoonist Zahoor has been selected from this newspaper that was published on May 7, 2024. The cartoon (see Figure 1) highlighting the silence of the Muslim world on the Palestinian issue has been selected through purposive sampling, which saves time and gives only the relevant data to the researchers.

Figure 1

Cartoon taken from 'Dawn' English newspaper: Dated 07-05-2024

Data is analyzed and interpreted utilizing the combined insights from semiotic and critical discourse analysis. For semiotic analysis, the researchers followed a step-by-step analysis. Firstly, the key signs in the cartoon, like characters and objects, were identified. Secondly, the meanings of these signs were analyzed where both the literal and contextual meanings were discussed, and finally, it was seen how the interconnected working of denotative and

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connotative meanings in these signs convey the underlying myth, i.e., the ideology being conveyed through these signs by the cartoonist. To carry out critical discourse analysis, the researchers followed the pattern of analysis Fairclough gave in his three-level model. At the micro level, textual analysis is carried out by examining both the visual representation and the linguistic signs used in the cartoon. The discursive practices were analyzed at the next level, where the socio-political context in the production and consumption of this carton was analyzed. Finally, considering the social practices at the macro level, the researchers explored the cartoon in relation to broader societal ideologies with a particular focus on geopolitical power structures. Hence, the intermingling of these two analytical frameworks helped the researchers to carry out a detailed and objective analysis of the selected cartoon, as this analysis covered both the visual and linguistic discourse in relation to the wider sociopolitical implications. The findings are discussed and presented in the form of discussion, and tables are drawn where required.

Discussion and Findings

The data is in the form of a cartoon (Figure 1) and exhibits the use of both linguistic and anon-linguistic sign systems. The analysis of this cartoon is carried out by combining insights from Fairclough's (1995) CDA model of analysis and Barthes' (1957) model of semiotic analysis to find out the conveyed ideology in the backdrop of sociocultural and historical background. The data is analyzed, and findings are presented in the following sections according to these two models of analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis of Cartoon

Textual Analysis

Figure 1 presents the pathetic condition of Gaza in contrast to the passive role of OIC through the artistic use of imagery. For example, the image of a butcher's "log" represents the ongoing violence which is being inflicted upon the Palestinians, while the "balloon" symbolizes the weak influence and fragile grip of OIC on the global powers and international issues. The indifferent attitude of the global powers, including OIC, is criticized through the absence of any human hand on the knife which is cutting Gaza. The very first image that captures the attention in this figure is the cartoonist representation of a human character i.e., a male dressed in thobe and carrying a Keffiyeh scarf on his head. The artist exaggerates the external appearance and physical features of this male character. His oval facial shape, arched eyebrows, large almond-shaped eyes, laterally full checks, a small straight nose, full lips, a prominently pointed chin and a thick moustache present him as a typical Arabic, which indicates that he belongs to the Muslim Arabic community. This Arabic attire, along with his external appearance and physical features, represents the Arab world with a particular reference to OIC. The world map in the form of a balloon appears in the left hand of this character. It can be noted that the cartoonist has employed the image of a balloon to symbolize the world and its stakeholders who are observing this violence in Gaza but act indifferently towards this issue. The connection between a balloon with a world map on it and its potential to fly away indicates that the world is paying no attention to stopping the atrocities in Palestine. Other than these images, the image of a cleaver can be noted in Figure 1. A cleaver is a type of knife that is used for chopping, mincing, crushing, slicing, splitting large pieces of soft bones, and slashing through thick pieces of meat. The use of such a device, which is cut into a wooden log with "Gaza" written on it, indicates the brutal murder and crushing of innocent people in Palestine.

Other than the images used in this figure, the artist employed linguistic choices in the form of written texts in this figure. Firstly, the word "GAZA" appearing on the wooden log brings into light the victimized position and catastrophic situation for the people of Gaza where they are facing brutal violence and killing. The name of this Palestinian city on the butcher's chopping block hints at the atrocities and brutalities indicating the massacre in Gaza. This message is further strengthened by the artist when he uses the word "Genocide" in the caption line. Genocide is an act of deliberate killing of many people from a particular nation or ethnic group where the intention is to destroy that group of people. The caption in Figure 1 is important for analysis as it adds meaning to the

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accompanying image and makes it easy for the readers to understand the implied meanings. The caption reads, "OIC SEEKS GLOBAL INTERVENTION TO HALT GAZA GENOCIDE". This one-sentence caption, all in capital letters, seeks the attention of readers.

OIC stands for Organization of Islamic Countries, which is an international organization of Muslims that was meant to work for the collective interests and safety of the Muslim world. The caption, though, highlights how OIC is seeking the attention of the world, but the ironic situation is that this organization lacks power and approach and is unable to stop the ongoing massacres in Palestine. This is highlighted through the position of the right hand of the human character, where the clenched hand exhibits both the anger and helplessness of this organization. Other than these linguistic messages, the name of the cartoonist in the bottom left corner of Figure 1 is also interesting to note. Apparently, it appears like a pair of glasses, but it can be noticed that the artist's name, "Zahoor", is drawn over here. Hence, the issue being highlighted in this cartoon is observed by the cartoonist with deep meditation and critical understanding.

Contextual Analysis

The cartoon, the focus of the present study researchers, appears in the Daily Dawn, which is a Pakistani newspaper that covers both national and international news and issues. In the present ongoing scenario of the world, this cartoon presents a burning issue of the day in the context of the ongoing rift between Israel and Palestine. The publishing of such a cartoon in the Pakistani context is a message to Muslim audiences who are sympathetic to the Palestinian people and have feelings of annoyance and anger for Israeli forces in the wake of their cruelties and violence. Hence, this text appeared at a time when the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was at its peak. The cartoonist has shown his feelings of anger and annoyance due to an unresolved problem that is worsening day by day. This text is intended for Pakistani people who feel a deep emotional and religious attachment to Palestinian people. Pakistan remains a steadfast advocate for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

This artwork is a visceral expression of the artist's emotional reaction, created to provoke thought and evoke empathy, compelling the world to recognize and confront this severe issue of genocide in Gaza. Satirical tension is heightened by the juxtaposition of two butchering tools used for chopping meat. Two instruments, "Meat cleaver" and "butcher block", evoke emotions by discussing the consequences of the Israeli violence against Palestinian people with the intention to destroy Palestine completely.

Other than evoking the sympathy of readers and viewers for the oppressed and victimized Palestinian nation, the carton highlights the role of OIC and global forces in the context of this pathetic situation as well. The cartoonist has criticized OIC for its inability to draw the attention of the powerful forces of the world to play their role in stopping the violence and saving the people's lives in Gaza. Likewise, the international community is also condemned for its indifference to this continuing violence in this region. Hence, the discursive practice reinforces a sense of hatred and frustration with the Muslim community and organization on the one hand and with global institutions and the international world on the other.

The caption line "OIC SEEKS GLOBAL INTERVENTION TO HALT GAZA GENOCIDE" is in the present indefinite tense, and it refers to the deteriorating situation prevalent in Gaza. The pathetic and uncertain situation is calling for attention and an immediate solution. The gravity and sensitivity of this issue with the indifferent attitude of the world is highlighted when the verb "seeks" is employed by the cartoonist in the caption line. The readers are expected to think over this issue, and the world, especially the global forces and parties, are criticized for the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine. The carton is published against the current scenario of Israel's crushing and killing of the Palestinians, but it has a contextual meaning as well in relation to the background history of this conflict. Hamas, the Islamic group, with its victory in the 2007 elections in Gaza, has been blamed by many countries standing with Israel as a terrorist group. This opposition has resulted in conflicts and war-like situations between

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Israel and Hamas. This unrest, followed by peace negotiations, resulted in no settlement. The recent war between Hamas and Israel started in 2023, and it is still going on, which has resulted in unrest among Muslims. The cartoon under study highlights this pathetic situation, making Pakistani audiences sympathize with the oppressed Muslims there in Palestine. Other than this, the cartoonist has also criticized the international community's indifferent and inadequate response to preventing human rights abuses in Palestine. The irresponsible role of the world towards the killing and suffering inflicted upon Palestinian civilians is highlighted as well.

Sociocultural Analysis

The analysis at this level focuses on the power dynamics as depicted in a particular discourse. Other than this, Fairclough (1995) pays attention to the hidden ideologies in a text with an agenda of social change. With reference to these ideas, it is noted that the cartoon in Figure 1, the focus of the present study, reflects broader geopolitical discourses to highlight the power dynamics. The role of OIC is shown ineffective in this cartoon where the man wearing an Arab dress is in a tense of holding the world, which is not in its control. Hence, OIC, despite being a representative of over 50 Muslim-majority countries, is unable to counter the dominance of Western powers and Israel. Other than the criticism of the ineffective role of OIC and the indifferent attitude of the world towards the issue of Palestine, the cartoon also presents Gaza as a victim of systemic violence where the international community is implicitly and indirectly involved in its destruction. Hence, the cartoon, through its portrayal of the powerless and disconnected image of OIC, has shattered the myth that the Arab- Muslim leadership has a role to play in protecting the rights of innocent and victimized Muslims.

The use of analogies is also important to explore in this figure. The first analogy is that of a balloon, which shows a connection between a balloon and the world map. The balloon, with its direction and pull and pressure to go upwards, indicates that the international powers are least interested in OIC's request to pay attention to the Gaza genocide. The world map used in the figure highlights the territorial boundaries through distinct lines where the world has no concern with the killings in Palestine on a humanitarian basis. The second noteworthy analogy is being used in the form of 'glasses lying on the ground'. Glasses symbolize our ability to perceive the world with clarity. When our two eyes fail to see, our inner eyes awaken. This highlights the awakening of inner awareness or wisdom when external vision is limited. Our third eye controls our ability to psychically see through the gift of clairvoyance and think about those issues that we are unable to see with two eyes. Meat cleavers and butcher blocks are lying on the ground on which the word GAZA is written, indicating violence affecting Palestinian people in many ways. It is not in the form of physical injuries or deaths but also causes emotional and psychological trauma. Violence in Gaza is not just affecting Gaza's people but is also having a significant impact on the surrounding community as well. Most countries in the world, big and small, have expressed their condemnation and outrage at the Israeli genocide in the Gaza Strip, ongoing for the last many months. In diplomatic language or just blunt wording, Muslim and Arab-majority countries, including Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, EGYPT, United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, are expected to support Palestine or, at least, remain neutral, a position that would earn them the contempt of their own people. The carton has appeared at a time when the hypocritical situation is prevailing in Arab and Muslim countries. All the Muslim countries have failed to activate their already-taken decisions to boycott Israel. For the Arab countries, the very idea of using the SUMED pipeline, basically envisioned as an Arab unity project, to supply Israel is the most embarrassing and shameful of all. Israel has killed and injured at least thousands of Palestinians in Gaza. This artistic work is a powerful expression of the artist's desire to foster peace and justice in Gaza.

Semiotic Analysis

Other than analyzing the cartoon from a CDA perspective, the sign system has been analyzed by the researchers as well. For this purpose, firstly, the primary signs in the form of objects, human characters and captions are considered. Secondly, each sign is analyzed with reference to two types of meaning, i.e., literal meanings and

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associated meanings. And finally, with the development of meaning-making, the underlying ideologies that these signs communicate are brought into the light. Table 1 presents the findings of this step-by-step analysis in a neat way, where each sign is enlisted with a relevant discussion of its significance in relation to the meanings and associated myths of these signs.

Table 1

Semiotic analysis of Figure 1

S. No	Signs in Figure 1	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Myths in relation to hidden ideologies
1	A human character i.e., man	The man is shown wearing traditional Arabic attire	Man with an expression of anger and disappointment stands for the Arab-Muslim world representing the OIC	The OIC, the representative organization of the Muslims, is powerless as it cannot prevent violence and protect the rights of Muslims.
2	Balloon like Globe	The man is holding a balloon which resembles a globe.	The international powers and community are not in the control of the OIC.	The OIC lacks the power and influence to make the world realize and support the Palestinian Muslims.
3	Butcher's Wood Log	The word Gaza is inscribed on a wooden butcher's log.	The people of Gaza are passive victims of brutal and indiscriminate slaughter.	Gaza is victimized by Israeli aggression, and people are helpless in the face of international inaction.
4	A sharp Knife without a Human Hand	A sharp knife is shown cutting a wooden log, i.e., Gaza. But no human hand is visible.	The absence of any human hand with a knife shows how brutal violence against Gaza is carried on where the culprits are hidden.	The indifference and lack of accountability on the part of the international community is highlighted where the oppressor is not blamed while the oppressed are suffering from massacre and violence.

As given in Table 1, the study of signs with reference to the connotative and denotative meanings helped the researchers to decode the hidden meanings conveyed by this cartoon. For example, the cartoon in Figure 1 represents the OIC as a weak and helpless body despite being a political body carrying the association of collective Muslim leadership. The facial expressions and body language of the man representing OIC indicate that this organization is unable to advocate and protect the basic rights of the Palestinians as it has little influence on the international community.

The second sign, the fragile balloon with the world map on it, symbolizes the inactive role and indifferent attitude of the world towards the Israel-Palestine issue, which indicates the power imbalance and the inaction of the global community. The term "global intervention" as used in the caption also highlights the need for the international community to realize the gravity of the situation, but the use of the verb "seeks" in the same caption exposes the reality that despite OIC's request, the world is just a reluctant and passive actor as for as the violence in Gaza is concerned. The third sign in the cartoon, the wooden log, symbolizes Gaza, which is under siege. The representation of Gaza as a small, passive and vulnerable object under attack and violence reflects the powerless and victimized

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condition of Palestine under the continued and ongoing violence. The sign of a sharp knife without any human hand holding it hints at the unseen forces who are involved in the massacre and killing of the Palestinian people other than Israel.

In short, the cartoonist has utilized the technique of visual juxtaposition of different signs to highlight the OIC's appeal and request against the backdrop of the ongoing Gaza crisis to criticize global apathy. Hence, the narrative of helplessness and urgency is constructed using signs in this carton where the international community is satirized for its inaction.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that political cartoons are meant to reveal certain hidden ideologies, which they do by utilizing both written and visual sign systems. The analysis of the current study cartoon has proved that political cartoons are a multimodal genre which constructs and deconstructs ideologies and exposes sociopolitical issues relevant to both national and international audiences. The present study cartoon revolves around the escalating violence and humanitarian crisis prevalent in Gaza in recent years. The critical semiotic analysis has shown that the cartoonist has utilized both the linguistic and non-linguistic signs in a juxtaposition to convey his ideology to the readers of this newspaper. Along with projecting the pathetic and condemnable situation of killing and destruction in Gaza, the cartoonist has also criticized the ineffective role of the OIC and the indifferent attitude of the international community. Hence, semiotic analysis presents the situation in a contrasting way where the apathy of the international community is presented in contrast to the OIC's call for help. The CDA analysis of this cartoon further strengthens this contrast and condemns the underlying power imbalances and the world's indifference to the Gaza crisis. Hence, the cartoon discourse has employed both linguistic and non-linguistic signs to denounce the issue, and it also evokes the international community to take immediate action to promote peace in Palestine.

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