NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

THE NAMIBIAN POLITICAL LANDSCAPE: A SEMIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF

DUDLEY'S SELECTED POLITICAL CARTOONS IN THE NAMIBIAN NEWSPAPER,

FROM 2016-2017

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE   MASTERS OF ENGLISH AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS

AT

NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES: DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

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CERTIFICATION

This Thesis has been read and approved as meeting part of the requirements for the award of the Master of English and Applied Linguistics in the Department of Communication, Faculty of Human Sciences, Namibian University of Science and Technology.

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DECLARATION

I, Liicka Andima, registered with a student number 200869558; hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work; has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university, and that the sources have been fully acknowledged by complete references. This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the Master of English and Applied Linguistics Degree in the Department of Communication at the Namibia University of Science and Technology.

Signature: …………………………….

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

In loving memory of my late revered mother, Lea Nuugwanga Jesaja (the fountain of inspiration), who departed during the course of my studies

ABSTRACT

Political cartoons are a powerful communicative weapon. They can distract and express a joke and yet they can also provide social commentaries on key aspects of reality. This thesis carried out a semiological analysis of Dudley's political cartoons, found in *The Namibian* newspaper. The analysis of the selected political cartoons was done from the Barthesian semiology perspective with the main objective being to interpret the meaning of the selected political cartoons at the connotative and denotative levels and also to present how the Namibian political landscape is depicted through Dudley's cartoons. A qualitative research design was used to gain an in-depth understanding and a clear description of the characteristics of the political cartoons used in this study. The study employed a purposive sampling strategy, specifically critical case sampling. Critical case sampling was used to select a small number of important cases to yield the most relevant information with the greatest impact on the development of knowledge. The analysis yields a contextually embedded text or set of images that can be subjected to multiple interpretations and discursive analysis. In brief, the study found that Dudley's political cartoons depict and portray the Namibian political landscape by divulging the political aspects of the country. Among the aspects portrayed through the studied political cartoons are corruption, unequal distribution of resources and poor service delivery in the public sector. The study concluded that political cartoons serve as an open mirror used by the media, specifically to generate public attention, reorient people and initiate social and political reform in Namibia. This study therefore recommends further exploration of the field of Namibian cartoons to unearth this rich segment and broaden knowledge as well as increase readership awareness of the importance of understanding this rich and interesting branch of the media.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Semiology, also called Semiotics, is the science of understanding images and symbolic art in general. Signs have meanings and their analysis is rooted in denotation (literal) and connotation (symbolic) meanings (Bouzida, 2014). Semiology has been defined by Saussure (1915) as the science of the life of signs in society, which implies that everything in a culture can be seen as a form of communication, organised in ways akin to verbal language, to be understood in terms of a common set of fundamental rules or principles.

Traditional or structuralist semiology is rooted in linguistics. Being one of its founding fathers, the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), claims that a *sign* is the fundamental linguistic unit, which consists of two parts: the *signifier* and the *signified.* The *signifier* is the *form* (the word, sound, image, etc.), and the *signified* is the *concept* evoked in our mind when we sense the *form.* de Saussure (1857/1913) emphasises the connection between the signifier and the signified, and the relationship between signs. One of his most important doctrines is the arbitrariness of signs, by which he means that the meanings of signs are unfixed and socially-constructed (Lee, 2003).

Semiology analysis, being a key element applied to signs, especially cartoons, is helpful in order to understand, decode the significant visual messages used by the media, and to generate meanings that refer to the socio-cultural and personal associations in the second level of signification which is connotation. Bouzida (2014) established that because semiology can be applied in the context of media to analyse any media texts (films, television programs, cartoons and adverts), it aids the semiotic reader as a receiver and plays an important role in the interpretation and eruption of meanings behind the media texts that are open to many interpretations. This study therefore sought to semiologically analyse Dudley's political cartoons using Roland Barthes theory.

1.1. Background of the study

A cartoon, for all purposes, is a funny take on issues and society in general, and it would be highly unlikely that an average person may not notice how far and wide the impact of the cartoons can be. Cartoons have created an impact on the society we live in and they have helped to change perceptions about the world around us. It is a crucial media segment that is worth the reader's attention to explore their nature and messages and exponentially appreciate the role played by editorial cartoons.

1.1.1. Political cartoons

Political cartoons date back from ancient Egypt's culture (of around 1360 B.C.) where human and animal caricatures were painted on walls. This genre then travelled to Europe and other parts of the globe (Shaikh, Tariq & Saqlain, 2016). Additionally, political or editorial cartoons, as they appear in today's newspapers and magazines, emerged in the early 1840s. Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (2001) presents that in 1843, the UK's *Punch* magazine (first published in 1841), quite cheekily assigned a new meaning to the word 'cartoon' when it used it to describe an exhibition of preliminary sketches of paintings and murals proposed for the Houses of Parliament, which were in the process of being rebuilt after the devastating fire of 1834 (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2001). At the time, *Punch* featured a weekly, full-page satirical drawing known as '*Mr Punch's pencillings*'. Furthermore, in July 1843, the magazine replaced the pencilling with a copy of its own entry in the Parliamentary exhibition (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2001). In a series of drawings, to which it gave the title 'cartoons', the magazine contrasted the lavishness of the new Parliament building with the hardship experienced by the country's poor (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2001). The full-page wood engraving by John Leech featured ragged paupers standing in puzzled bemusement in front of a gallery of opulently framed portraits (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2001). The word cartoon stuck and quickly became associated with pictorial satire and eventually with any humorous drawing (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2001).

Ruff and Nelson (1999) define a cartoon as a drawing, representational or symbolic, that makes a satirical, witty, or humorous point written by a cartoonist who can be defined as a writer and artist, philosopher, and punster, cynic and community conscience. A cartoonist seldom tells a joke, and often tells the truth, which is funnier. In addition, the cartoonist is more than a social critic who tries to amuse, infuriate, or educate. He/she is also, unconsciously, a reporter and historian (Ruff & Nelson, 1999).

As visual images, cartoons are used in media representations or constructions of politicians, political parties, their attitudes to the public, or as the effects of their actions and inactions on the public. Political communication through the use of visuals is rooted in the thinking of text producers about the ability of visual images to provoke deeper feelings in people than spoken or written language. Therefore, it is generally believed that visual resources can stir people more effectively to accept certain required actions than verbal language (Ademilokun & Olateju, 2016). It is interesting to note that visual images such as cartoons have increasingly been used in the media as powerful communication tools. Political cartoons, in particular, are used worldwide as representations or constructions of politicians and political parties, and their attitudes to the public, or the effects of their actions and inactions on the public.

The political cartoon is often satirical in nature and castigates the social misdeeds, sayings, views or events that have to do with highly placed personalities. Hence in nature, a cartoon is therefore, a vital tool employed by the press for its watchdog role in society (Onakpa, 2014). Communication through the genre of political cartoons is considered a mocking and ironic commentary on political, social, economic and international situations. Political cartoons are often perceived as both humorous and deeply serious content involving both fictional and non-fictional elements (Mohammed, 2014).

Additionally, political cartoons are a form of media messages that harnesses linguistic and nonlinguistic devices used not only as vital instruments of information dissemination reflecting social practices and happenings, but also as a principal means of public access by which the public participates in the societal wider spectrum of debate about a particular event or social phenomenon (Hogan, 2001). Political cartoons have been used to uncover

the reality of events in society. Moreover, cartoon messages have been manipulated to set a political and social agenda in different societies across the world. Generally, as a distinct media genre, political cartoons appeal to the minds of the audience and at the same time challenge their communicative and interpretive competence (Sani, Abdullah, Ali & Abdullah, 2014). Political cartoons are therefore a powerful communicative weapon because they can distract and express a joke but they can also provide social commentaries on key aspects of reality. Therefore, although not always acknowledged, cartoons are a key element of political communication.

Edwards (1995) argues that it is the medium of cartoons that signifies the climate of political discourse and future plans, both in the politicians' personal and national interest. Edwards (1995) further emphasizes that the language functions that form part of such editorial images are a means of transmitting one's cognitive and social development and sharing one's specific attitude. The purpose of political cartoons basically is to inform, persuade, advertise, issue rules and regulations, and legislate mandates. Cartoons reflect the popular culture as they provide an insight into the social trends and account for how particular events make particular shared meanings for a specific social group (McLuhan, 1964). Published cartoons are not ordinary in their nature; they change minds, make beliefs, transform ideas, and guide both directly and indirectly.

1.1.2. Cartoons in the Namibian context

In the Namibian context, editorial cartoons have occupied a significant position in the print media. They play a role as a communication tool and a lens through which the political development of the country can be seen. Dudley, as a Namibian cartoonist, presents his cartoons in every Friday's edition of *The Namibian* newspaper, where he writes about many issues in the country. The issues covered include political, economic and social aspects on current happenings. Through his cartoons, Dudley does not only promote humour, but also keeps the reader informed via the depiction of the latest events in the country. Despite the use of cartoons to relay political messages, there is limited evidence, if any, particularly in the Namibia context, that indicate the extent to which these cartoons succeed in

communicating such political messages. Because many see cartoons as a source of humour, they may fail to see the actual message behind the cartoon. Despite the deployment of visuals for political purposes, there has not been much scholarly engagement with the subject matter (Kangira & Mwetulundila, 2014). Given this context, this study undertook a semiological analysis of the political cartoons and subsequent texts by Dudley in *The Namibian* newspaper.

The presentation of Dudley's political cartoons in *The Namibian* newspaper is equally a deployment of the country's media eye. The political commentary by the cartoonist is an indication of a friendly and free political climate that allows the media to exercise and present political content freely without intimidation. Freedom of expression, for many countries, Namibia included, lies at the heart of democracy. It is critical for many reasons, including its instrumental function as a guarantor of democracy, its implicit recognition and protection of the moral agency of individuals in society and its facilitation in the provision of information by individuals and society generally (Mwetulundila & Kangira, 2014). It was crucial that after independence, the Namibian government, through the Constitution, granted freedom of expression through Article 21 as follows:

> All persons shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media. (The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, p. 12)

The Namibian Constitution recognises that individual members of society need to be able to hear, form and express opinions and views freely on a wide range of matters. It is worth noting that the Namibian Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, and Namibia's media has generally enjoyed a relatively peaceful environment.

In Namibia, political parties are essential building blocks of a democratic political system, without which democracy cannot function, thus elections and political parties are essential institutions in democracies. Parties competing in elections give voters a choice of

representatives and policies. But parties that intend to participate in elections must feel that they can be competitive, which is often compromised due to sub-optimal campaigning, fundraising and the building of media profiles.

Since independence in 1990, all political parties, including SWAPO, the ruling party, endeavour to foster their democracy by electing their leadership into office after every five year term. The Congress is any political party's supreme decision-making body. The Congress sets the party's policy agenda and reviews the developments and activities of the party. It elects the Central Committee (CC) and the four top officials of the party (du Pisani & Lindeke, 2009). The year 2017 marked another period for Namibian political parties, as their congresses were held in 2017. Since political campaigns are tied to elections, which determine the individuals who will lead the people, they attract a lot of media attention, and cartoonists like Dudley make use of this opportunity to exploit and depict the political events through their works of art. Most of the cartoons used in this study were drawn from this significant political period that marks and reflects the hype surrounding the Namibian political landscape.

The Namibian newspaper that was founded in 1985, hosts Dudley, a cartoonist who is interested in commenting on the political environment, has been used for the rise and use of cartoons. Dudley's cartoons have gained popularity since the apartheid era when he would expose and ridicule apartheid politicians (Mwetulundila & Kangira, 2014). According to Lister (2010), Dudley has had a keen interest in politics since the 1970s. He was a judge's clerk in the Supreme Court, and started cartooning at the age of 20 when he noticed and detested the evils of racism of apartheid politicians in the early 1980s. Lister (2010, p. 68) further argues that after the apartheid era, it was difficult for Dudley to decide who to ridicule because those in power had become his 'comrades'. After independence, he stopped cartooning for a while, but continued after his 'comrades' started to commit public gaffes.

The political cartoons used in this study were published 26 years after independence, specifically between January 2016 and December 2017. Readers with minimal reading abilities can understand and relate to a format that communicated powerful ideas in a humorous manner through analogy, irony, exaggeration, and symbolism. Like other political cartoonists, Dudley's political cartoons express opinions on public issues. Madisia (2011) proffers that cartoons have always been a perfect vehicle for expressing feelings or opinions that are difficult to communicate publicly, or to point out areas that are not appropriate in social life. Being humorous, and having the capacity to make a joke, political cartoons have been part of unwritten *body language* for many years. Meanings behind laughter put smiles on our faces, and act as clever ways to challenge the power and decisions of our leadership in order to bring about changes for the betterment of society (Madisia, 2011).

The study focused on semiological analysis, a key element that is used to understand and decode the significant visual messages used by the media, and to generate meanings that refer to the socio-cultural and personal associations at the second level of signification which is connotation. In addition, the semiology reader as a receiver plays an important role in the interpretation and the eruption of meanings behind the media texts that are open to many interpretations (Bouzida, 2014). It is against this background that the present study undertook an analysis of the selected cartoons, by employing Barthes' approach in unearthing rich information embedded in the selected samples from the Namibian media discourse.

This study is not about politics, but rather about how political thoughts and opinions can be interpreted as they manifest through interesting but rather complex signs. In general, the worldview of the artist was accepted as the truth for the sake of analysis. According to Jabbar (n.d.), the interpretation of visual information is highly subjective and puts more demands on a viewer/observer than on a receiver of language-based communication, which operates within the more restricted space of convention.

1.1.3. Barthesian analysis perspective

According to Barthes (1977), an image is related to the aesthetic and ideological factors that are open to readings and interpretations at a connotative level in order to explain how meaning is created through complex semiotic interactions. Thus, semiotics in media studies uses a wide variety of texts including images, adverts, and films to provide the recipients with the knowledge they need to have the ability to analyse and produce meaningful texts and designs in the future. From this perspective, Barthes (1977) suggests the death of the author, the creator of the text, in order to witness the birth of the recipient, allowing him/her to interpret, read, and produce a wide range of meanings which are a form of semiotic production that is oriented to observation and analysis of media messages and discourses. This is in order to open the senses of the semiological researcher to the complexity of semiotic interpretations and new methods of using signs within the social and cultural context in the media (Barthes, 1977).

Because semiology is concerned with signs in language, it has allowed the proliferation of a number of perspectives that have paved the way for other cultural phenomena, which in turn has raised the study of signs through their denotative and connotative meanings. Similarly, from a linguistic point of view, signs are anything that conveys a message (words, images, gestures, voices, and even thoughts). Signs do not only portray meaning, they also offer ideologies, worldviews, and lifestyles (Mendoza, 2016). "Anything can be a sign as long as someone interprets it as signifying something – referring to or standing for something other than itself" (Chandler, 2007, p. 13). The meanings of signs are socially constructed and likewise they construct society.

Barthes (1977), one of the main figures of semiology, developed a semiological approach with a new spirit that refers basically to denotation and connotation in relation to photographic images as a system of signs. Barthes (1977) also claimed that the term connotation can be applied to semiotic modes other than language (Bouzida, 2014). According to Barthes (1977), an image has two layers: what and how it is represented.

Barthes (1977) describes denotation as concrete and connotation as a more complex and abstract concept.

When studying editorial signs such as cartoons, a semiological method from the Barthesian perspective in qualitative analysis is useful as it goes beyond the text or the image which is open to an infinite number of interpretations. When applying the semiological method to analyse visuals for their messages, Barthes (1977) suggests the sign as a combination of a signifier and a signified. Accordingly, connotation is not always a means to innovate meanings because it communicates and evokes ideas as in the case of the different semiotic modes of communication. Barthes' works show a new semiotics doctrine that allows the analysis of the signs system in media in order to prove how nonverbal communications can have connotative meanings.

Some visual images, specifically cartoons which newspapers employ, utilise humorous sketches to satirise issues in society while telling stories at the same time. Single panel graphics comment on various issues in society ranging from political events and policy, to health, sports, and business and entertainment topics (Nwabueze, Igboeli & Ubah, 2017).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Visuality is an important feature of political expressions worldwide. The Namibian political environment too manifests an interesting deployment of visuality for political purposes that are worth an exploration. Although Dudley's cartoons have been part of the Namibian political discourse even before independence, they have received limited scholarly attention. It is therefore evident that there is little knowledge and understanding of the importance of cartoons as vital tools in transmitting political messages. This study embarked on analysing these rich media images semiologically, in order to understand the country's political image.   Political cartoons in particular, do not appear to comment on whether politicians are wrong or right, rather they leave it to the audience to decide. As cartoons can

be interpreted denotatively and connotatively, it is against this background that the study sought to unpack Dudley's cartoons. This was done in an effort to understand their embedded meanings in order to help relevant stakeholders to understand the political messages gleaned from these vital sources of information.

1.3 Research objectives

The main aim of this study was to conduct a semiological analysis of selected political cartoons in *The Namibian* newspaper from 2016-2017. The specific objectives were to:

- analyse the meaning of selected editorial cartoons using semiology;
- interpret the meaning of the selected political cartoons at the connotative and denotative levels; and
- present how the Namibian political landscape is depicted through Dudley's cartoons.

1.4 Significance of the study

Political cartoons are an interesting field, yet they have not received much academic attention in Namibia. There are few studies that have focused specifically on Namibian political cartoons. One of these studies is entitled '*An analysis of rhetoric and humour in Dudley's political cartoons*' carried out by Mwetulundila (2014). It is therefore significant that this study sought to widen and increase the significance of the rich sources of important message carriers. This study contributes to the increased understanding of political cartoons as a political communicative tool and specifically how cartoons are used as political symbols in assessing political development in Namibia. The study uses Namibian political cartoons in order to increase knowledge of the communicative function of political cartoons. It further adds to the available, but limited literature on studies of cartoons in Namibian politics, to benefit other scholars in related fields.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

The cartoonist deals with various issues from different social, economic and political spheres of Namibia and across its borders. This study, however, focused specifically on 18 selected political cartoons published in *The Namibian* newspaper, from 2016 to 2017, ahead of the various political parties' elective congresses.

1.6 Limitations of the study

A wide collection of Dudley's political cartoons is available but due to time constraints, this study focused on 18 political cartoons that were published between 2016 and 2017 in order to carve out a specific niche in the Namibian political sphere. Therefore, findings from this study cannot be generalised to reflect on renditions by political cartoons in different historical periods. The study carried out was exclusively a semiological one in nature and the researcher based the analysis on personal knowledge. The interpretation of the cartoons studied may, however, vary from one analyst to another.

1.7 Definition of key terms

Semiology - is the science of understanding the image and symbolic art that would be able to systematically read all human sign systems used for the analysis of signs other than those found in linguistic sign systems (Barthes, 1964).

Cartoon - is a pictorial parody or imitation, which, by the devices of caricature and analogy as well as ludicrous juxtaposition, sharpens the public view of a contemporary or topical issue, event, political or social trend (Sani et al., 2012).

Political cartoon - is a symbolic artistic illustration making a witty or humorous point containing comments on social issues, events or personalities, combining satire and hyperbole to question authority and social mores (Sani et al., 2012).

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter provided the orientation of the study by giving the background and perspective of political cartoons. The chapter also presented Roland Barthes' perspective, the basis of semiology analysis as a fundamental approach of the analysis applied to the cartoons under study. The Namibian cartooning context, the problem statement, research objectives, and significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study have been discussed in this chapter. The next chapter reviews the literature related to the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores previous studies and articles on the semiological analysis of signs. It specifically looks at cartoons from a broader perspective and specifically political cartoons, focusing on how they have been studied for their political function in their specific contexts. In addition, this chapter presents how several analysts and scholars have interpreted political cartoons semiologically, using the Barthesian approach. Although the study analyses Namibian political cartoons with the purpose of unravelling the political landscape, there is a dearth of semiological analysis on political cartoons in Namibia hence the reviewed literature in this chapter is obtained from countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Nigeria and beyond the continent. The chapter is organised as follows: Semiological analysis, political cartoons, theoretical framework and research gap.

2.2 Semiological analysis

Barthes (1968), states that semiology aims to include any system of signs, whatever their substances and limits, such as images, gestures, musical sounds, and objects. Barthes (1968) uses the denotative and connotative 'levels of meanings' to analyse the signs in visual objects and defines them as follows;

1) Denotation

Denotation is what all people see as it relates to their society, culture or ideology (Bouzida, 2014). In other words, denotation is the basic meaning of visual signs. This is the first level of signification.

2) Connotation

Connotation describes the interaction that occurs when the sign meets the feelings or emotions of their users and the values of their culture (Fisk, 1990). Barthes (1968), states

that connotation itself is a system that comprises the signifier and the signified and it is the process which unites the former to the latter.

Connotation is a term coined by Barthes (1968) to explain the way signs work; it describes the interaction that occurs when the sign meets the feelings or emotions of the users and the values of their culture (Fisk, 1992). It is, in this sense, influenced by the subjective factors that open more interpretations of the text.

Additionally, the Barthesian approach does not recognise the oneness of meanings because the text needs a deep reading in order to bring about multiple meanings which become an infinite number of connotations. Therefore, the text in this sense becomes a great linguistic body related to significance. For Barthes (1968), connotation relies upon the prior existence of denotation; it always works in the borrowed territory of the denoted. The semiological analysis of the visual signs / images deals with reading, explaining, and analysing the image, and explaining its significance in the sign system. This process represents a symbolic interaction between the denotative and connotative meanings. Barthes expressed that the photographic image contains two co-existent messages: the first without a code, which is denoted and the second with a code, which is connoted (Jamieson, 2007).

A picture can represent something and carry multiple meanings, based on how the viewer interprets it. By seeing the picture, the viewer can conclude not just what the picture is, but what the motive is. In analysing an image, it is not just about what exists in the image, but what the meaning of the image is. It relates to the denotative and connotative analysis described in Barthes's semiology theory.

2.3 Review of literature on political cartoons

Ashfaq (2014) proffers that political cartooning has been used as a medium of comic and witty expressions of politics for a long time. When print media became accessible and common, cartooning became one of the popular arts to make a social and political comment. Additionally, cartooning is a versatile means of communication that can be used to fabricate, exaggerate, overstate and distort the features of any character or situation,

creating a semblance of the original in order to convey the desired message. Political cartooning can be regarded as a quick way of communication because it can grab the attention of the readers and give a full understanding of broader issues in a single glance. It has the ability to tickle or hurt the target (Ashfaq, 2014). According to DeSousa and Medhurst (1982, p. 84), it is the primary sociological capacity of the political cartoon, which is essentially "a culture-creating, culture maintaining, as well as culture-recognizing artifact". Therefore on this socio-cultural level, cartoons reveal assumptions and partialities, tapping into aggregate awareness in a way that reaffirms cultural values and assists readers in maintaining a feeling of self, others, and society.

Visuals follow logic by association, connecting different meanings that would not necessarily make sense if written down or communicated orally. "Visual communication is based on visual similarity and individual experience with the visual motif" (Müller & Özcan 2007, p. 287). Similarly, the communicative power of cartoons lies in their ability to present often-complex issues, events and social trends in a simplified and accessible form. They usually do this by employing the devices of caricature, analogy and ludicrous juxtaposition to sharpen the public's view of contemporary issues. While many of the artworks created by cartoonists are humorous, they can also have quite a 'cutting' edge'. They may, for example, deride public figures by exposing their idiosyncrasies, eccentricities and vanities (Kleeman, 2006). Significantly, cartoons seek to elicit a response from the observer and predispose him or her to a particular course of action or way of thinking (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2001, p. 3).

Özdemir and Özdemir (2017) present cartoons as a form of visual news discourse. It is through comedic conventions that cartoons seize upon and reinforce common sense, and thus enable the public to actively classify, organise, and interpret meaning in what they see or experience of the world at a given moment. In addition, cartoons are examples of messages which attempt to convey a wealth of information by simple, direct means.

Ojo (2015) defines political cartooning as a reflection of the society and historical period that produce it. It is also an expression of corrupt social conditions, often tells untold stories, and may challenge people to seek positive change. Cartoons, particularly political cartoons

found almost exclusively in news publications, visually illustrate a point of view on current issues. They represent the seen and the unseen, and provide insights and meanings beyond the literal. Ojo (2015), further emphasises that interpreting a cartoon requires familiarity with current issues, as well as an understanding of cultural contexts, and analytical judgments, because, beyond the obvious meaning, the viewer must seek the more profound insinuations of the image. An image functions as a text that produces meaning based on real-life situations, with the possibility of multiple interpretations. In order to effectively interpret political cartoons, an understanding of the historical, literary and cultural references used by the artist is indispensable; otherwise, the viewer would be excluded from the communication. Meanings arise as each viewer sees a comparison between the portrayed scene and the larger issue.

Regarding their views on caricature, Sani et al. (2012) identified that in recent years there has been increasing research on political cartoons across disciplines. This has made political cartoons a potent interdisciplinary research field crossing different research boundaries such as education, sociology, sciences, psychology, health research, pragmatics and communication. Sani et al. (2012) further argue that this growing research interest demonstrates that political cartoons have become a distinct and established genre within media discourse (Sani et al., 2012). The goal of the genre is to construct practical criticisms and provide political commentary aimed at reorienting the public. In a similar tone, political cartoons are indispensable to any newspaper. Ariyo (2017) attests that cartoons are a visual medium that engages the audience, and helps them understand and interpret the political, social and economic scene in their country and the world. Equally, these political cartoons have lately gained much importance and have a raised standing in newspapers. Political cartooning is essential for a newspaper in order to convey a point of view which may shape perceptions and equally help readers to understand the political mood of the country, which in turn may benefit people (Ariyo, 2017).

According to Jabbar (n.d.), a political cartoon consists of a number of signs. A cartoonist may use verbal or non-verbal language or both. The meaning could be explicit or implicit. The explicit meaning is called denotation whereas the implicit meaning is called connotation. Conradie, Brokensha and Pretorius (2012) presented their views, based on the rhetoric

function of irony in Zapiro's political cartoons. Their focus was on how this trope is used to construct ideology, when it combines semiotics with critical discourse analysis (CDA). Conradie et al. (2012) suggest that interpreting messages that focus on tropes requires more cognitive effort from readers in comparison with explicit communication methods (Conradie et al., 2012). As a result, this may enhance enjoyment and recall of the text message. In each case, readers must, in the first instance, identify the narratives that are being contrasted, before processing the way in which the discrepancy constructs irony in an attempt to communicate social criticism. Similarly, Mathew (2011) asserts that an understanding of the context surrounding the presented cartoon is crucial for one to comprehend what the cartoonist intends to communicate. Without this knowledge, the semiological resource becomes meaningless.

Ulubeyli, Arslan and Kivrak (2015) conducted a study aimed at finding out about society's perceptions of the responsibility of workers for occupational health and safety as presented in cartoons. Their study involved a semiotic analysis of seven cartoons exhibited in the International Construction Accidents Contest held in Turkey. Each cartoon has a story, and by relating an event or a situation in their findings, it is presented that cartoons can convey societal perceptions. Cartoonists use exaggerations, incongruities, distortions, allegory, and humour, as well as the gross and sublime to mock the intended target or to communicate the desired message. Cartoonists establish imagery in their cartoons through the choice of setting, characters, costumes, and the situations they portray (Vokey, 2000). A cartoon also aims to narrate a lot with less material. Because of its compressed form, it is often considered to be a direct and easy method of communicating a message. This means that complex thoughts that need a lengthy written explanation can be reduced to a single metaphor in some images.

Mathews (2011, p. 10) identifies that everyday political cartoonists listen to the news in search of social and political ironies, and then create images that sum up those thousand words into a single picture. Mathews (2011, p. 10) adds that political cartoonists criticise politicians' behaviour when there is something wrong with their leadership. Mathews (2011) further clarifies that in order to comment on what is happening, critics adopt a negative tone. Mathews (2011, p. 10) further adds that the cartoon's function is not as an

agent of change but as a statement of consensus; they are an invitation to remember cultural values and beliefs and participating in maintaining them. Dudley as a cartoonist does the same thing and has argued that: "I don't have an agenda, nor do I think I can influence the political process. I provide no solution, rather I comment on the error of the matter" (Lister, 2010, p. 68).

Dudley's cartoons do not come unexpectedly, but come about as a response to what happens in our society. For example, when Dudley started cartooning in the early 80s, he started cartooning simply because he was not happy with apartheid politicians (Lister, 2010, p. 68). Consequently, Dudley responded to a situation that was already there. Equally, Dudley's political cartoons use both language-based and visual-based rhetoric. Both of these elements work together to persuade the audience that there is something wrong in our society.

A single cartoon can mean a lot to those who understand it and are able to relate to its context, but those who do not understand it may find it senseless. Lister (2010, p. 68) says that through a single cartoon, Dudley can explain what is happening in the country. Mathews (2011, p. 9) posits that a political cartoon plays an important role in society "as political commentator, news contextualiser, and critic of power". Political cartoons comment on current issues in the society, in most cases on the issues that the cartoonists think are not right. They then highlight to the readers of newspapers that there are issues that can elicit our emotions. In addition, political cartoons function as news discourse in society because they contextualise timely topics (Mathew, 2011). Similarly, Ashfaq and Hussein (2013) maintain that cartoons published in newspapers are the critiques of the issues of personalities and institutions of that specific period and situation.

In one study, Walker (2003) examined political cartoons in respect of political communication. Walker (2003) argued that cartoons are used as a powerful weapon for communicating political issues. This is because cartoon messages can easily be absorbed by audiences and transmitted in mass circulation. Walker's (2003) findings indicated that political cartoons are of social importance because they are used to set a social agenda and

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provide satirical commentary aimed at transforming the social and political norms of society.

Generally, as a distinct media genre, political cartoons appeal to the minds of the audience and at the same time challenge their communicative and interpretive competence. In this regard, El Refaie (2009) carried out a study on how readers interpret political cartoons. The result of the pilot study indicated that in the case of political cartoons, interpretation lies solely in many different kinds of literacies, including a familiarity with cartoon conventions and a broad knowledge of current affairs and the ability to draw conclusions or analogies. Thus, this revelation challenges those who are of the opinion that cartoons are simple and easy to read. El Refaie's (2009) findings suggest that even highly educated audiences, who are to some extent more informed about political issues need to put into play a whole range of literacies such as good analogies of idioms and metaphors as well as other linguistic skills in order to fully grasp the meanings conveyed in the cartoons.

Nwabueze et al. (2017) examined three Nigerian daily newspapers: *Daily Sun*, *Vanguard* and *The Nation* to ascertain the frames of Ebola cartoons, the perceptions of the cartoon by the audience, and the interpretation of the cartoon messages. The findings of the study revealed that most of the audience could not interpret the cartoon messages due to a lack of understanding of the drawings. The researchers recommended among others, that cartoonists should make their drawings less technical and simpler for easy understanding by the audience.

Cartoons, according to Sani et al. (2012), constitute one of the most strategic and vital medium of using language to disseminate information and to reorient the public on current issues reflecting on the social and political realities of a particular society at a particular time. To them, given the use of linguistic and non-linguistic devices, the political cartoon as a genre provides a medium for communicating messages through which social and political agendas are set. Sani et al. (2012), further add that the reader must not think that cartoons are just there for fun. Instead, they must note that cartoons are there to stimulate thinking and discussion. Cartoons are designed to make the reader to think about both the event and the people being portrayed, and the message that the cartoonist is trying to convey.

Moreover, the cartoons can be meaningful to those who understand the context in which they are based.

Conners (2007, p. 267) reminds us that one must have some knowledge about the history of the cartoon to which it refers in order to decode a cartoon successfully. Following this line of argument, it is wise for the audience to be from the same background as the cartoonists or they are not going to understand the cartoons. Cartoonists make it easy for the audience to understand their cartoons by using icons, signposts, or posts that a reader can relate to or identify with (Mwetulundila, 2014).

Sani et al. (2014), reveal that political cartoons can be a powerful weapon for influencing public opinion pertaining to issues of public interest such as the audience's views on candidates, especially during campaigning and voting periods. Sani et al. (2014) indicate the persuasive power of the cartoons, because the point they are making can quickly be transmitted and absorbed by the audience. Similarly, Hammett (2010), states that political cartoons function as a key indicator of the democratic health of a polity. They are a barometer of press freedom, of the government's tolerance of free speech and critical thought, and of resistance to dominant power relations.

The current research study therefore made an effort to gather available literature on Namibian editorial cartoons but could only find very limited data. The literature reviewed and presented in this study therefore covers studies from the Southern African region and also different parts of the world.

In their study, Kangira and Mwetulundila (2015) explored the use of rhetorics and humour in 25 of Dudley's political cartoons that were produced in 2012. The study revealed that Dudley's political cartoons employ ethos when the characters who were chastised and cheered at are individuals who have a high profile in society; people at whom the readers are looking up to and people who are deemed to have goodwill and who have the nation at heart. Additionally, it was found that Dudley uses several ways to present his cartoons to his

audience. In some cases, he describes the subject of his cartoon, and sometimes he labels the subject by using a caption to make it easy for his audience to recognise the subject that he sketched and who is satirised in the cartoon.

Willems (2011) discussed how and whether comics in Zimbabwe could be positioned in relation to the question of power and resistance. Willems (2011) revealed that political cartoons in Zimbabwe could certainly be seen as forms of political resistance and that they have opened up alternative communicative spaces, columns and editorials. Willems's (2011) study further highlighted that cartoonists openly criticised politicians and the findings demonstrated how ordinary Zimbabweans processed the arrival of the economic and political crisis in their everyday lives.

Moreover, Mapuwei (2014) used the social-semiotics approach to examine the representations and portrayal of President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai through editorial cartoons. The cartoons depicted both the macro and micro levels of legitimacy as they focused on both the moral and the individual approval of political leadership by society. Specifically, Mapuwei's (2014) research assessed how, why and to what extent *The Zimdaily.com* editorial cartoon representations reflected happenings on the ground. The editorial cartoons drew their symbolic depictions from the colonial legacy and independent African states jubilation era in which state structures clearly reflected and duplicated political party domination.

Grand, Nyoni and Nyoni (2012) researched on the role of a newspaper cartoon ('Wasu' of *The Manica Post* in Zimbabwe) in the socio-economic and political landscape of Zimbabwe. The analysis reveals that although for the ordinary readers a cartoon is primarily meant to tickle them to laughter, on a more serious level, it is meant to comment on the 'goings-on' in a particular society. A cartoon also aims for a better and improved society, depending on how the society perceives cartoons. Grand et al.'s (2012) showed that cartoons are often perceived by the cursory reader as mere trifles of humour instead of being viewed as very important socio-politico-economic commentaries. Like any other artists, cartoonists should be seen as the eyes and ears of society - the insiders who remind the readers, often in an unforgettable and 'cruel' manner, about their glaring shortcomings.

Kondowe, Ngwira and Madula (2014) analysed verbal and nonverbal features of Malawi newspaper political cartoons and *how* they employ linguistic features in their portrayal of political leaders. Twenty Point of Order cartoons, that depicted President Joyce Banda and her government, were selected from *The Nation* newspaper from October 2012 to May 2013 and they were analysed. The study concluded that the cartoonist deliberately provided vague information, not to show confusion or lack of authoritative knowledge; but rather to indicate precision. The vagueness is strategic to avoid appearing judgmental and to prompt the readers to generate their personal understandings of the president's actions by taking into account the daily social and political context. The cartoonist strategically presented vague information to the readership to detach himself or herself and to reduce the strength of their claims, especially when they cannot provide evidence to justify stronger statements which might put their credibility at risk. Furthermore, it was also noted that the Malawi cartoonist avoids personal intrusion and does not want to appear as being judgmental of public figures but presents it in a humorous way.

Fiankor, Dzegblor and Kwame (2017) looked at the role played by political cartoons in representing the Ghanaian presidential elections court proceedings and final verdict via the mass media. Fiankor et al., 2017) also aimed at identifying and explaining the meaning and importance of images or visual illustrations to depict issues and events as well as representations of major political figures in political cartoons. The presidential election petition went down in the history of Ghana as the most discussed court case on radio, television, in the newspapers, by word of mouth and on social media. One other mode of communication used in presenting the proceedings and outcomes of this unprecedented presidential petition was the use of political cartoons in the newspapers in Ghana. Fiankor et al. (2017), through their findings, have shown that cartoons are an appropriate means of communication that can even impact political discussions. Equally, political cartoons are an art form and mode of communication that can be used by academics, policymakers, and other stakeholders to shape political agendas and social issues. This is because cartoons, other than words, leave a lasting picture in the memory of readers and political cartoons can be used to ensure peace before, during, and after many general elections.

Ogbo and Nuhu (2016) critically analysed the use of satire as a form of imagery to depict political issues in cartoons as featured in the Nigerian national dailies. Ogbo and Nuhu (2016) found that political cartoons are an effective means to express their thoughts and ideas about political issues, events or personalities in a particular period in a playful manner. Cartoons are openly and discreetly used to make compelling statements and to provide specific knowledge on contemporary socio-political issues. Ogbo and Nuhu (2016) highlighted that the goal of political cartoons is to raise public consciousness using figurative tone and graphical imageries to address crucial issues and to criticise political leaders and their contemptable practices. Political cartoons are a medium of political reporting, articulating a particular message from a particular point of view using language and imagery as prime tools.

Eko (2015) conducted a study on how specific cartoons serve as instruments of satirical deterritorialisation and political reterritorialisation. The study revealed that cartoons are effective vehicles for exaggerating the physical traits, human foibles, and political idiosyncrasies of the rich and powerful for purposes of passing moral judgments on them. Cartoons are therefore journalistic counter-discourses and satirical instruments that seek to reorganize moral territories and political relationships. Many African rulers who are the subject of satirical cartoon criticism attempt to reterritorialize themselves by literally deterritorialising cartoons and cartoonists. They ban newspapers and cartoons and jail or exile cartoonists.

Shaikh, Tariq and Saqlain (2016) evaluated Pakistani political cartoons in order to gain a general understanding of the structure and important features of political cartoons. In this semiotic study, Shaikh et al. (2016) focused on analysing political cartoons based on the Pakistani general election campaign of 2013. Shaikh et al. (2016) found that cartoons were used as communicative tools on the internet and in print media to produce significant meanings and dominant political themes. The findings revealed that political cartoons have become an important part of political activities because people enjoy imagining the whole story by just seeing a small representation. Additionally, the study indicates that cartooning is a fun-based activity that relies on the creative abilities of the cartoonist who is from the

same stream. In addition, because signs have meanings, their analysis is rooted in denotation (literal) and connotation (symbolic) meanings.

In another study, Streicher (1967) indicated that visual messages are more succinct and they provide a clear summary of an event or issue at hand. They are therefore, given preference over conventional media news. Streicher (1967) claimed that cartoons help audiences to read news and to scan through the meaning of an issue or an event, particularly those audiences who give preference to visual news and those who have little time. Streicher (1967) further contended that political cartoons' capability to comment on social and political issues make them a distinct medium that contributes significantly by facilitating effective communication.

Conners (2013), in an analysis of political cartoon images of the 2012 Presidential debates, found that consistent with other media covering the 2012 presidential campaign, political cartoons attended to the events surrounding the three presidential debates between Mitt Romney and Barack Obama. Conners (2013) concluded that political cartoons were part of the media campaign narrative, and were more memorable than many stories or columns and therefore offered a humorous visual commentary.

Furthermore, Tehseem and Bokhari (2015) discussed the face saving and face spoiling nature of political cartoons in Pakistan newspapers. The study aimed to explore a previously under-explored issue of political cartoons in Pakistan newspapers and proved that through comic portrayal, the political affiliations of a media group are revealed.

Moreover, Ashfaq (2013) also explored the role of political cartoons in opinion building and the expectations of the readers towards political print media cartoons in Pakistan. The results indicated that cartoons published in newspapers are the critiques of the issues, personalities and institutions of the current situation as it can be said that cartoons are the chronicles of current history. It is a unique form of communication which edges on the verge of fine art. The study concluded that political cartoonists are also influenced by the ideology of newspapers. In another study, El Refaie (2010) also explored young people's responses to political cartoons published in newspapers. El Refaie (2010) claims that newspaper cartoons

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are part of multimodal texts because they combine verbal and visual semiotic mode in creating and conveying meaning. The researcher piloted the use of newspaper cartoons as a means for soliciting young people's views concerning the meanings of the cartoons. The findings indicated that young people's opinions can be influenced through cartoon messages and interpreting multimodal texts is often more complex than comprehending verbal texts.

Džanić (2013) analysed several political cartoons which, in a humorous way, represent issues arising from American politics. Although cartoons take very little space in written media, they contain a powerful and complex message from their authors, which the reader can decode with thorough knowledge of economic and political circumstances. Additionally, Džanić (2013) claim that cartoons can actually be more expressive than newspaper articles, since the specific language of a cartoon affects the reader. Furthermore, pictorial language is often exploited in cartoons as a basis for allusions to certain issues that are implicitly, rather than explicitly, addressed in cartoons. Džanić's (2013) study showed that in order to understand the meaning of political cartoons, the viewer must unpack the blend and reconstruct the input spaces following the cues represented verbally and visually in the cartoons. Actually, in the completion stage of blending, the viewers must solve the interpretative puzzle based on the cues provided in the cartoon, which activate appropriate portions of knowledge. Because political cartoons can be understood at a glance, they reach more people than a written editorial commentary; they can be taken in by 'skimmers,' those people who glance across an editorial page but do not take the time to read its text (Chambers, 2013).

In addition, Adejuwon and Alimi (2011), in their paper entitled "Cartoons as illustration: Political process in Nigeria", utilised selected political cartoons from Nigerian dailies to analyse socio-political and economic issues vital to the political process in Nigeria. The study found an expression of strong political opinions of the target audience and also that cartoons have become pungent instruments of communication and illustration in Nigeria.

Pineda-Martínez and Zumeta (2016) carried out a study to identify the different themes explored in the comic strips published by the Basque newspaper, *Egin* (1977/98), during its

first year of operation. The nationalist newspaper had a great impact on the Basque society during the Spanish transition to democracy because it was the first left-wing publication in Basque. The results show a clear preference of cartoonists for issues related to the promotion of democracy, as well as the existence of an opposition within the premises of traditional Basque nationalism against the new form of nationalism promoted by leftist movements.

Ariyo (2017) analysed the features of multimodal discourse in the cartoons, discussed the manner of their deployment in the cartoons and related the features to the contexts in which they were applied. Ariyo (2017) concluded that visual images are linguistic tools that are rich in meaning. They can bring to the fore easy interpretations and understandings that are strong and powerful, especially, when sensitive issues such as political issues are related and discussed. In addition, the cartoons are deployed to enhance easy understanding and comprehension of the messages on sensitive political issues.

Mendoza (2016) aimed to analyse the editorial cartoons of the broadsheet, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, using semiotic concepts to reveal the signs and the symbol/index/icon triad as reflected in the cartoons concerning the 2013 Presidential election. The editorial cartoons illustrated the Filipinos' perceptions of the election in relation to their concerns, anomalies and popular views. The infamous personalities involved were the cartoonists' medium to freely mirror the views of the common folk. In light of the 2013 election, the signs that circulated within society and which society formed, in the main attacked the issue of the Philippines' struggle towards a clean and honest election.

The qualitative research design was used to analyse the meaning of editorial cartoons through Chandler's (2011) semiotic concepts: signs and the symbol/index/icon triad. The editorial cartoons gathered were related to the election period in the Philippines from January to June 2013 and they were taken from the official website of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*.

Ademilokun and Olateju (2015), in their paper, presented a multimodal discourse analysis of visual images from the political rally discourse of 2011 electioneering campaigns in

Southwestern Nigeria. The study concluded that semiotic resources or artefacts are an important aspect of political rallies because of the inherent political, cultural, and social communications that are revealed through them.

I-Wei Wu (2018) analysed political cartoons relating to late Qing constitutionalism, a pivotal political campaign during the last decade of the empire. I-Wei Wu (2018) looked at how late Qing newspapers related political cartoons to the Chinese tradition of political humor and how Chinese cartoonists displayed their wit and humor in their satiric depiction of the constitutional movement, including the constitutional mission and the parliamentary petition campaign. I-Wei Wu (2018) argues that late Qing political cartoons functioned as a crucial medium for representing Chinese political humor in visual form. The images, by drawing on the absurdity inherent in certain political issues, wield satire as a weapon against the government.

There may be instances whereby political cartoonists can become enemies to those in power because cartoonists highlight their wrongdoings. Lamb (2004, p. 42) states that:

> Many political cartoonists place their societal position as enemies of those in power who use that power for their own personal benefit at the expense of others. From this position, the goal of political cartooning is to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. This implies that the societal role of political cartoons is to present critical arguments that point out villainy of people and institutions that hold more socio-political power than others do.

Mohammed (2014) attests that visuals such as editorial cartoons greatly assist in arousing readers' interests. In the print media, cartoons equally assist in providing a clear mental picture, enhance understanding, help memory and provide a shared experience. Some cartoons are even featured without captions or written explanations, yet the messages inherent in them are still understood by readers. Mohammed (2014) further solidifies that the cartoon serves as a capsule version of editorial opinions meant for the reading public to swallow and probably cure societal ills. In other words, the drawing or graphic illustration and the commentaries in cartoons on political and social issues are not only intended to create fun for the readers but they also seek to ginger their sense of reasoning into

clamouring for positive change in the political structure. The political cartoon is often satirical in nature and castigates the social misdeeds, sayings, views or events that have to do with highly placed personalities. The cartoon is therefore a vital tool employed by the press for its watchdog role in the society. By keeping public officials on their toes, the cartoon assists in correcting societal ills.

2.4 Research gap

There is a wide range of work that has been conducted on semiology analysis of cartoons, at the regional level as well as worldwide. The researcher could, however, find only limited studies on political cartoons in the Namibian political context, mostly focusing on rhetoric and humour, but none on semiological analysis. This presents the picture that Namibians may have limited, or no knowledge on the importance of these cartoons as rich resources, hence the need to explore, and unravel these artistic products in order to widen and increase the availability of studies in this specific sphere.

2.5 Theoretical framework

This study uses Roland Barthes' theory of semiology (Barthes, 1977). Being one of the early semiologists, Barthes derived his theory from Ferdinard de Saussure's study of sign and signification. Saussure proposed the dyadic model of 'linguistic sign' consisting of 'signifier' and 'signified'. de Saussure (1915) argues that 'signs' have a *syntagmatic* and *paradigmatic* relationship; in other words, the signs are horizontally and vertically bound to one another. de Saussure's (1915) notion of 'sign' is the object of study. Any sign, according to de Saussure (1915), therefore consists of two components, the *signifier* and *signified* (de Saussure, 1915). These two components are combined in such a way that they cannot be separated (Eco, 1979). Barthes (1964) points out the arbitrariness of language in regard to the signifier and the signified. Barthes (1964) attempted to broaden Saussure's theory of the sign system. Barthes (1964) saw Saussure's sign system as mostly language-based and believed that it may be inadequate to explain the complexity of visual communication, thus

Barthes (1964) felt that it lacks a theory to describe perceptual interpretation (Barthes, 1964).

Barthes (1977) uses two terms to describe the signification process. Signifier refers to the object that produces meaning such as body, clothes, books etc. and the signified relates to the concept or mental impression of the signified. Barthes (1964) further believes that there are different orders of signification to distinguish between denotation and connotation. Denotation is the "literal or obvious meaning" or the "first-order signifying system". For example, the denotative meaning of an image refers to its literal, descriptive meaning. Connotation refers to "second order signifying systems", namely additional cultural meanings. Barthes (1964) further developed this idea of the relationship between denotation and connotation and argued that denotation is associated with closure and singularity (it is the enemy of free play, opposing even the limited plurality made possible by connotation), while connotation represents the principle of opening up the text to all kinds of cultural meanings, even to the point of questioning the coherence and the identity of the text. This leads to the issue of closed and open systems, which are two types of semiotic systems (Buozida, 2014).

There is no "correct" way of interpreting meanings; on the contrary, they are open to all kinds of readings (Barthes, 1957). The first order of signification is that of denotation; at this level there is a sign consisting of a signifier and signified. Connotation is a second order of signification which uses the denotative sign (signifier and signified) as its signifier and attaches to it an additional signified (Chandler, 2002, p. 143). Barthes (1964) argues that connotation is a sign which is derived from the signifier of a denotative sign, so denotation leads to a chain of connotations, for example when changing from sharp focus to taking photographs can generate different connotations. Barthes (1964) explained that denotation is an underlying and primary meaning.

Overall, the Barthesian approach does not recognize the oneness of meanings because the text needs a deep reading in order to generate multiple meanings which become an infinite number of connotations; therefore, the text in this sense becomes a great linguistic body related to significance. For Barthes (1964), connotation relies upon the prior existence of

denotation; it always works in the borrowed territory of the denoted (Jamieson 2007). It can be said that connotation is built on denotation. Thus, connotation for Barthes (1964) is a reproduction of the message whether linguistic or visual; it is a product of mental abilities responsible for reading between the lines.

Through Barthesian semiological analysis of signs, the study helps the researcher to discover the hidden meanings of the visual signs and texts within the socio-political context. This means that the analysis of media phenomenon as a system through the manifested signs, whether verbal or non-verbal, can be studied as Barthes proposed in his approach according to the two levels of signification; denotation and connotation (Bouzida, 2014). Visual messages are studied by using this analytical approach as texts need a deep reading in order to develop the different interpretations of this message. By understanding the Barthesian approach; readers are presented with an open but easy and clear model of understanding that cartoons are rich carriers of information underlying the presented image. It requires, however, a reader with special analysis skills to read, interpret and understand such media signs, specifically editorial cartoons, in order to unearth the rich meanings embedded into them. The semiological reader as a recipient plays an important role in the interpretation and the eruption of meanings behind the media texts that are open to many interpretations.

2.6 Chapter summary

The chapter looked at a comprehensive body of scholarly work on political cartoons, drawing on disciplines such as semiology and literary or rhetorical analysis. The chapter further looked at the study's theoretical framework, Roland Barthes' semiology. Barthes' work makes valuable contributions in analysing and helping us to understand media signs that are expressed by two messages; the first is denoted and the second is connoted in the process of significance.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted to analyse Dudley's political cartoons selected from *The Namibian* newspaper. The chapter deals with the criteria for the choice of the selected cartoons and also presents the research approach and design, the population, sampling techniques, data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical consideration as applicable to this study.

3.2 Research approach and design

This study employs a qualitative approach which is defined by Creswell (2013) as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, or holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of respondents or informants, and conducted in a natural setting. It also enables the researcher to obtain detailed data in its natural setting. Since the qualitative approach is interpretative in nature, it gives an opportunity to the researcher to interpret the data in a detailed manner. The qualitative research approach was chosen because of the descriptive nature of this study. The method is also useful in gaining an in-depth understanding and a clear description of the characteristics of the political cartoons used in this study. This was a desktop study where sources already published are used for the purpose of analysis of the selected cartoons. Semiology was used to analyse the chosen political cartoons in order to establish their meanings as per the Barthesian perspective, to unearth their denotative and connotative meanings.

3.3 Data collection procedures

In selecting the cartoons for this research, the researcher paid attention to the political cartoons printed between January 2016 and December 2017. The selected cartoons which are publicly available were accessed and obtained from *The Namibian* newspaper's website

(**https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php**). A total of 18 political cartoons were analysed semiologically, using Roland Barthes approach.

3.4 Study population and sampling procedures

The population of this study is *The Namibian* newspaper that publishes Dudley's cartoons on a regular basis. The cartoons are always on the editorial page, mostly on page 11, and they are obtained from the newspaper's website. *The Namibian* has a wide readership hence most of its readers are aware of Dudley's cartoons that are published on a weekly basis. Therefore, the researcher saw it fit to use cartoons from this newspaper because it has built its credibility for years.

This study focused mainly on 18 political cartoons published between January 2016 and December 2017. They were considered to have carried rich content in terms of reflecting on the Namibian political landscape. They mostly contained information that covers many political themes and events that are critical to the nation and those directed to the 2017 elective congress of the political parties, in preparation for the 2019 national elections. The selection criteria focused mainly on the 18 political cartoons which allowed the researcher to analyse Namibia's political developments. The key element of the preliminary selection was the political landscape as this period marks the crucial time when the Namibian political sphere was a hyped stage. The political depiction reflected in most of the political cartoons divulges the unfolding of the activities directed to the efforts of committing to the success or failure of the political congress. The semiological analysis, connotatively and denotatively, unraveled how different political undertakings shape the Namibian political space.

Sampling is a technique employed by a researcher to systematically select a relatively smaller number of representative items or individuals from a pre-defined population to serve as subjects (data source) for observation or experimentation as per the objectives of his or her study (Sharma, 2017).

This study employed a purposive sampling strategy, specifically critical case sampling. Critical case sampling involves selecting a small number of important cases to yield the most information and to have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge (Patton, 2015). The sample was limited to published cartoons directed towards various political congresses, so these specific samples generally depict the political unfolding and development of the country during this marked period towards the political elections, hence they were a principal source of the data required for the study. The researcher selected the samples carefully in order to reflect a true representation of the Namibian political sphere. According to Patton (2015), purposeful sampling looks at information-rich cases from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry. Studying information-rich cases yields insight and in-depth understanding. However, it should be acknowledged that since purposive sampling has been selected based on the judgement of the researcher, a certain bias or arbitrariness in the choice of the political cartoons cannot be completely ruled out.

This study used political cartoons drawn from a newspaper as rich artefacts for analysis. Artefacts are an important aspect of politics because of the inherent political, cultural, and social communications that are revealed through them. Political cartoons serve as a running commentary on social change and in many instances seek to provoke a reassessment of existing social attitudes and values (Kleeman, 2006). For the most part, political cartoons highlight and comment on what cartoonists believe to be the significant news of the day, with the aim of influencing the reader to adopt a particular point of view and predispose him or her to a particular course of action. Stylistically, political cartoons can be quite diverse but most employ symbolism/visual metaphors and caricatures to explain often complex political and/or social issues in a humorous or satirical manner. Whatever their style, they are a powerful instruments in shaping the parameters of public discourse and debate. For purposes of illustration, the selected political cartoons are incorporated in Chapter 4.

3.5 Ethical clearance

Research ethics are focused on what is morally right and not right when involved with participants or accessing archival data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The researcher obtained the selected samples from the official website (www.namibian.com.na) of The *Namibian* newspaper, which is publicly available, and used them primarily and exclusively for academic purpose. The researcher ensured that all sources used in the study were acknowledged, as per the required standard of the institution (Namibia University of Science and Technology). It was also the duty of the researcher to ensure that no cartoon is reproduced for any other use apart from for this study. For privacy purposes, it was the responsibility of the researcher to maintain confidentiality of the information about political individuals, especially those depicted in the cartoons under analysis. Additionally, it was of importance that the researcher maintains adherence to the ethical codes as prescribed by the Namibia University of Science and Technology. The researcher also applied for the ethical clearance certificate as required and was rightly advised by the Higher Degree Committee that due to the nature of the study and the type of data involved, the certificated was not necessary.

3.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined the research approach and research design applicable to this study. The population and sampling procedures were also discussed and the ethical considerations which were followed were highlighted.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of selected political cartoons by Dudley. Each cartoon is analysed separately in order to unearth its denotation and also the connotation meaning around it. The researcher developed a variety of ways and tools to analyse the selected political cartoons, applying the Barthesian semiological approach in order to study images mainly at the denotation and connotation level. Analysing a political cartoon can lead to a deeper understanding of the issues addressed by the cartoon, as well as the historical context from which the issues originate. The 18 political cartoons analysed contain different political themes that shape the Namibian political landscape, which are analysed and presented semiologically as follows:

Figure 1: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on land distribution

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php

Denotation

From a denotative viewpoint, the cartoon above displays two black men; one with a brown shirt and the other fellow is bare-chested, carrying a stick and a bag of arrows. The two men are engaged in a conversation as shown by the speech bubble '*I think it's fair to say I got here before you*'. In the background is a group of other people waving placards written 'LAND', while the main headword of the cartoon reads '*queue jumper*,' denoting that there are some who have not followed the order.

Connotation

The land issue is a central bone of contention in Namibia. The land problem has been traced from the time of colonialism when the country was divided into homelands according to tribes by the then colonial administration (Melber, 2018). The land problem kept growing, even after the country gained independence. Although the constitution granted right of

ownership to every citizen in any region of choice, there have been challenges to land distribution as some citizens felt there was no fairness and that land has not been equally distributed. The problem has persisted to date, with tribal connotations being attached to the issue. Some tribal groups felt that specific jurisdictions should be reserved for particular inhabitants; hence claims for ancestral land sprang up.

The bare-chested man is San and in his utterances, he believes that he should be considered first when it comes to land provision because historically, the San people are said to be the original inhabitants of Southern Africa before other tribes emigrated from other parts of Africa. The cartoonist used the brown colour for the men at the fore front of the picture to highlight the colour of the Namibian soil and to depict originality in terms of the ownership by the San speaking people. The question of 'ancestral land' has caused much trouble and division because some groups feel that they should be given preference over others and some feel that this approach fuels tribalism, thereby causing disunity. Tribes like Namas and Ovaherero claim that they have lost their ancestral land to the colonisers who are nowadays the farmers and have since fenced off the entire areas for private use, leaving them without any place to call home. Because of this historical background, the government has embarked upon the resettlement programme to buy farmland from private owners and to resettle individual citizens on such farms. The resettlement programme is however not well received as there are claims of irregularities. The land issue is echoed by Melber (2018), who has argued that:

> Despite independence since 1990, land ownership remains unfairly distributed in Namibia, and the impacts of colonial rule are still being felt. The former liberation movement South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) is in government, and people expect it to resolve the land issues. Many Namibians thus see the country's law as protecting the rights of privileged minorities, whose standing has hardly changed. A considerable number of the land grabbers, after all, are members of the higher public administration or belong to the party leadership. Members of the political and bureaucratic elite received preferential treatment. (p. 1)

The group of men in the background is seemingly chanting and carrying placards displaying the word 'land'. There are many Namibians without land and who are desperate to obtain it. In the background, it displays 'queue-jumper', and a San man who claims to have arrived before others. The depiction centres on the controversial land distribution resettlement programme that has been alleged to be nonprocedural and not considering the needy but favouring those that are politically connected (Melber, 2018).

Politically, this cartoon portrays the land distribution problem that faces the country, which although being dealt with, is far from being resolved. Since Namibia as a country is challenged with the distribution of its resources, there are individual citizens who engage in unethical practices to gain access to the resources, depriving others that are not politically privileged. This is reflected in the next cartoons, unearthing corruption deeds.

Figure 2: A semiological analysis on the Minister of Finance and corruption

Denotation

The cartoon denotes Calle Schlettwein, the Minister of Finance, having a conversation with a rattlesnake, asking him to join the dance. The green, yellow and black cobra stands on the letters forming the word *'corruption'*. The Minister of Finance turns the dance offer down, as the heading displays, '*Calle says no to corruption'*.

Connotation

Dudley, as the cartoonist, has used the 'rattlesnake' figuratively to call to attention and highlight the seriousness of the matter at hand. The figure presents the period of tabling the national budget, done in March every financial year. The cartoonist depicts the culture of corruption in Namibia, whereby it can be assumed that whenever it is around the time of the budget, the minister in charge of finances faces many temptations, especially from those that are politically attached and who try to steal when no one is looking. Rattlesnakes are known to be highly venomous and their bite can be fatal, especially for human beings.

The snake is generally also known for deceitful deeds from the biblical times, hence the cartoonist picturing those approaching the minister in the form of a snake. The clearly visible green, black and gold rattle snake has sharp colours, which the snake is known to be highly venomous. The rattlesnake with the highlighted bright colours depicts danger, as the specific species is the most aggressive and dangerous in comparison to other types. This, from the cartoonist's perspective, may signify individuals with rich, yet powerful political affiliations that are close to the government or are within the government and can therefore easily influence the decisions with their antics and charms, which are mostly represented by greed. The cartoonist presents a scenario which depicts the Namibians as corrupt and always looking for a way to get their hand on the country's finances through the responsible minister. Corruption seems to be rampant and there are those citizens who cannot live through clean means but who always want to resort to unethical means by approaching and tempting those with keys to the treasury. By saying 'No' to the rattlesnake, the cartoonist declares that the new finance minister is not corrupt and he is one who does not have time for behind the door dealings as has possibly happened in the past, perhaps with the previous finance ministers. Politically, the figure affirms Namibia as a country that has corruption which is seriously deep-rooted and as such it is equated to a rattlesnake.

Figure 3: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on State-Owned Enterprises and state funds

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
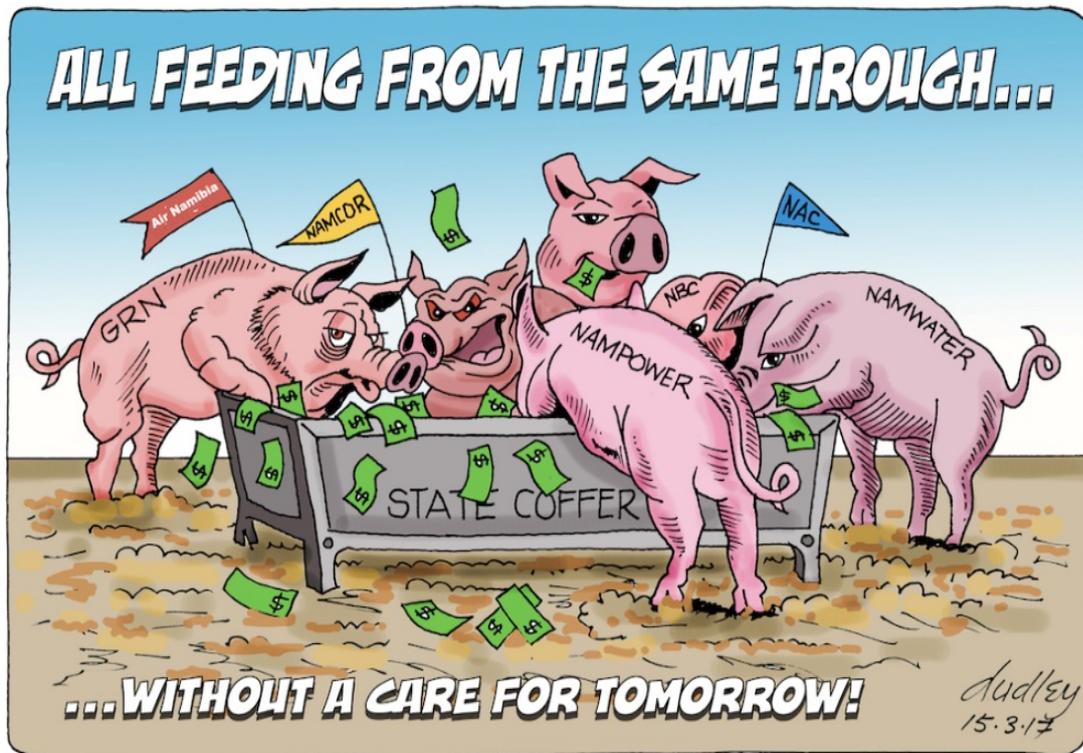
Denotation

'*All feeding from the same trough….',* the cartoon depicts a number of pigs trampling for food from one trough. The pigs bear names of different Namibian state owned enterprises and the green papers which are scattered, bear the dollar sign. There are also three small flags in different colours which are written the other names of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs).

Connotation

The cartoonist portrays the picture of the state budget allocation which had just been completed and how different SOEs all depend on receiving benefits from the state coffers without mercy. The funds allocated are depicted through the scattered green papers, which

may represent money being wasted. The cartoon was presented in March, the month in which the stated budget is presented. Different agencies, organisations, ministries and state owned enterprises benefit from this state budget. The cartoonist paints a picture of how the government funds are utilised, mostly to rescue the state owned enterprises, whilst being inconsiderate of others or the future. The use of pigs as SOEs symbolizes animals that are careless and which would rather trample on the available food and even stumble over it without care. There are SOEs which are profit-making and which are supposed to generate their own funds and thereby self-sustaining; however, they are heavily dependent on the state, hence they drain state coffers. SOEs are regarded as the biggest spenders and squanderers of state funds without a care for tomorrow. Amongst the pigs depicted by the cartoonist is the government itself. The government also depends on the collected revenues in order to deliver the services to the citizens. It can, however, be classified together with the SOEs because of the manner in which the state funds are utilised. It is common to read, mostly in the media, about the misuse of state funds or misplaced priorities in terms of budget allocations. The state of high corruption and other irregularities in the government has reduced efficiency in service delivery, depriving the country of its deserved level of development.

In many instances, these enterprises overspend their allocated portions and beg for a bailout from the same government, before their financial year comes to an end . This has been an ongoing culture, perhaps because of poor control mechanisms in place, mostly lacking of accountability in terms of the usage of the given funds.

Figure 4: A Semiological analysis of political cartoons on government spending

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
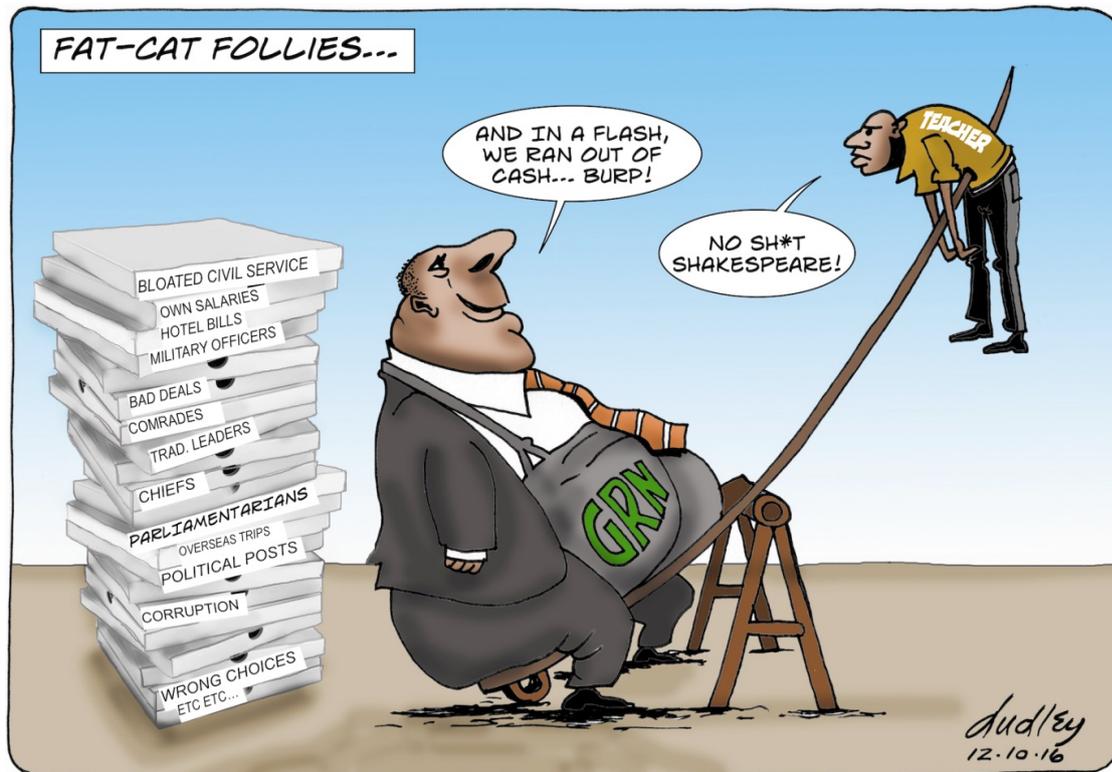
Denotation

The figure denotes a big, fat man with a shirt branded 'GRN' having a conversation with another small thin man on the spear with a shirt on which is written 'Teacher'. Next to the man with a shirt written GRN is a pile of boxes/ books bearing different names.

Connotation

The cartoon is in reference to the time in 2016 when the teachers stood up to demand a salary increment. The year 2016 was only the second year after President Hage Geingob took the Namibian presidency, and soon after his presidency assumption, claims arose that the country was experiencing financial difficulties. The financial crunch could be attributed to the pile behind the fat man who personifies the government. Amongst the contributing factors listed on the pile are such as a bloated cabinet, of which the number of parliamentarians was increased from 72 members from the previous administration, to 104 in the current cabinet. Another factor was the increase in the number of ministries, which

increased the number of civil servants and placed a heavy burden on the government's bill. It took a short while, when President Hage Geingob took the office, before most of the sectors and government divisions started experiencing financial constraints.

The cartoonist paints the picture that even though the government is the employer for the teachers, it does not prioritise them in terms of salary increments. It cares little and does not want to listen to them as they demand a pay hike. Politically, the cartoonist paints the picture of a government with misplaced priorities, focusing on unnecessary spending and the creation of non-essential divisions while neglecting the crucial ones. Additionally, it portrays the government's inability to manage its expenses. The cartoonist highlights that there is something wrong with government spending and its priorities and this provokes the audience to spot the government's weaknesses.

Figure 5: A semiological analysis of political cartoon, forty seven million for legal advice

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
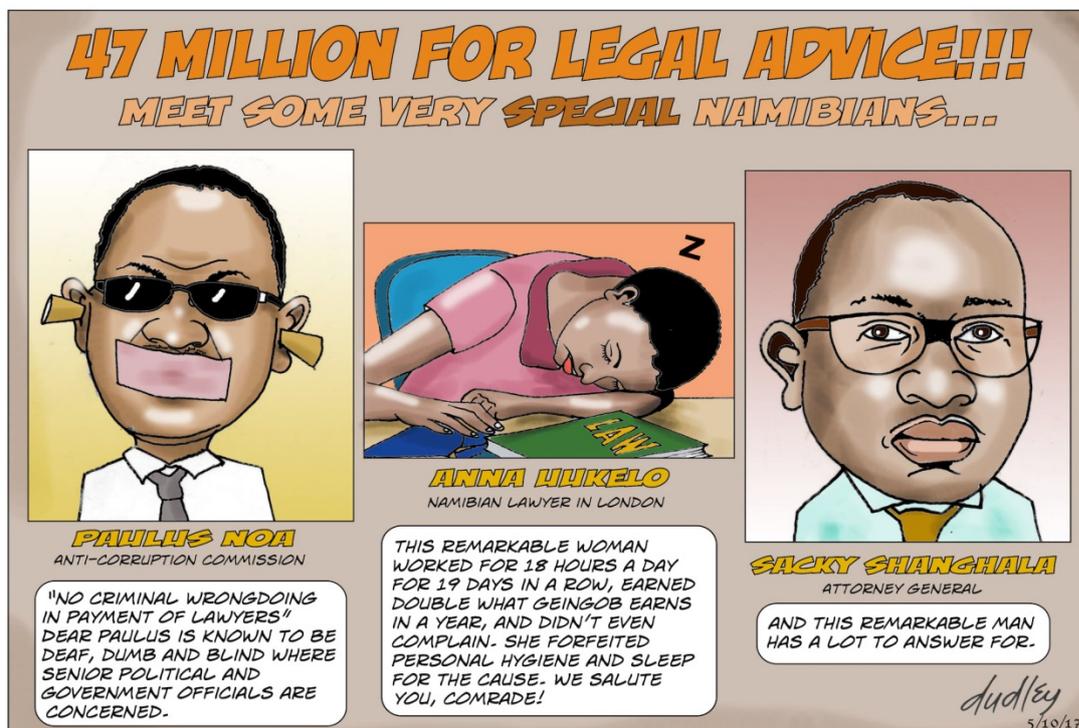
Denotation

The cartoon above denotes three different figures and bears the title, '47 million for legal advice!!'. The three figures display different physical appearances; Paulus Noa's mouth is taped and his ears are blocked. The lady in the middle, Anna Uukelo, is sleeping on a table with the book of law next to her. Lastly is Sacky Shanghala, the Attorney General, who looks on in a relaxed manner.

Connotation

The cartoon above was presented during the time that Sacky Shanghala was an Attorney General, when the Herero-Nama genocide case was in the spotlight. The cartoonist portrays the people in the picture as *'special Namibians'* based on the subject matter at hand. Anna Uukelo, a UK based Namibian and other legal practitioners in the United Kingdom were paid 47 million from state funds, to work on the case of the Nama and Herero Genocide of 1904 and advise on the way forward. The issue sparked a controversial debate as the amount of legal fees paid to these lawyers was exorbitantly high. Even though they seemed and were labelled as highly competent, the results of their work did not seem to be pleasing and yielded no results as the case remains unresolved. Anna Uukelo, the Namibian lawyer in London, is seen on the table, dosing off. This portrays that the team has not made any effort to work on the matter but simply pocketed the tax payers' money. Many questions were raised for example, 'Why foreign-based lawyers?'. Some citizens felt that it was one dirty, yet corrupt way of the attorney general to connive with the others and swindle the state to squander the taxpayers' funds. Ironically, the cartoonist also puts forth how the anti-corruption commission insisted on investigating the matter and also claims to have seen nothing wrong with the deal and all the transactions involved. This, to the shock of the nation, was a pure act of corruption by those in power, and because of their influential positions, they would always get away with their wrongs as not even the watchdogs are able to convict them.

Figure 6: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on the shortages at the Ministry of Health

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
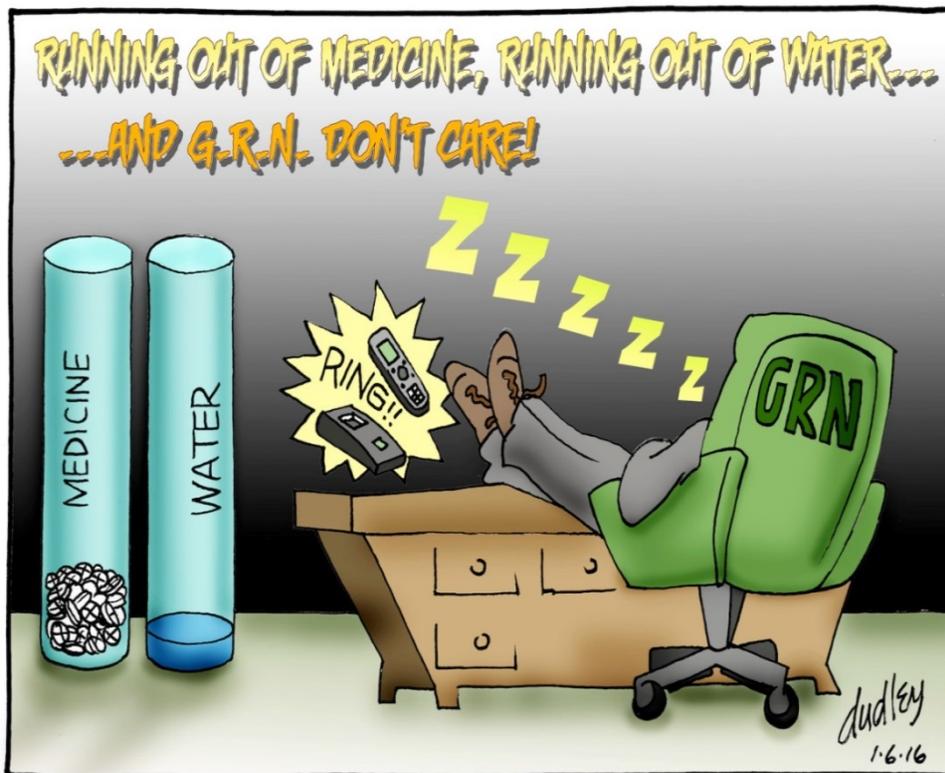
Denotation

The figure above denotes a person seated on the chair branded GRN, and person is dozing. Next to the person is a telephone headset that seems to be ringing but it is not being answered. The cartoon displays two cubes labelled water and medicine, and they are almost empty. All that appears in the figure are the words; '*Running out of medicine, Running out of medicine……and GRN don't care*'.

Connotation

The cartoonist does not make use of full sentences. He uses phrases that can be easily accessible to the audience; readers can easily grasp what the cartoon is about. The depiction in the cartoon connotes a serious situation encountered at the Ministry of Health in 2016. The hospitals ran out of medicines including antiretroviral drugs for HIV positive patients (''State hospitals out of critical drugs – again,'' 2016). On some occasions,

Windhoek hospitals had their water cut as a result of the ministry's unsettled bill with the local authority. The cartoonist highlights an I 'don't care' attitude by the government. The man seated on the chair signifies the government that is unconcerned and which does not pay attention to the citizens' health needs. The almost empty cubes represent most of the health services that are declining, and the ringing telephone represents concerns and queries from Namibian citizens who are not attended to and whose complaints only fall on deaf ears as the ministry responsible does not care.

The cartoonist depicts a political perspective whereby the government does not really take health matters seriously. Even though the Ministry of Health is one of the most crucial ministries that are supposed to be on the fore front of delivering services to the citizens, in this case it is different. Those that are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that the ministry runs and keeps up to its mandate seem to be failing the government. The figure above connects to the next cartoon that emanates from the Ministry of Health.

Figure 7: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on the Ministry of Health Crisis

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
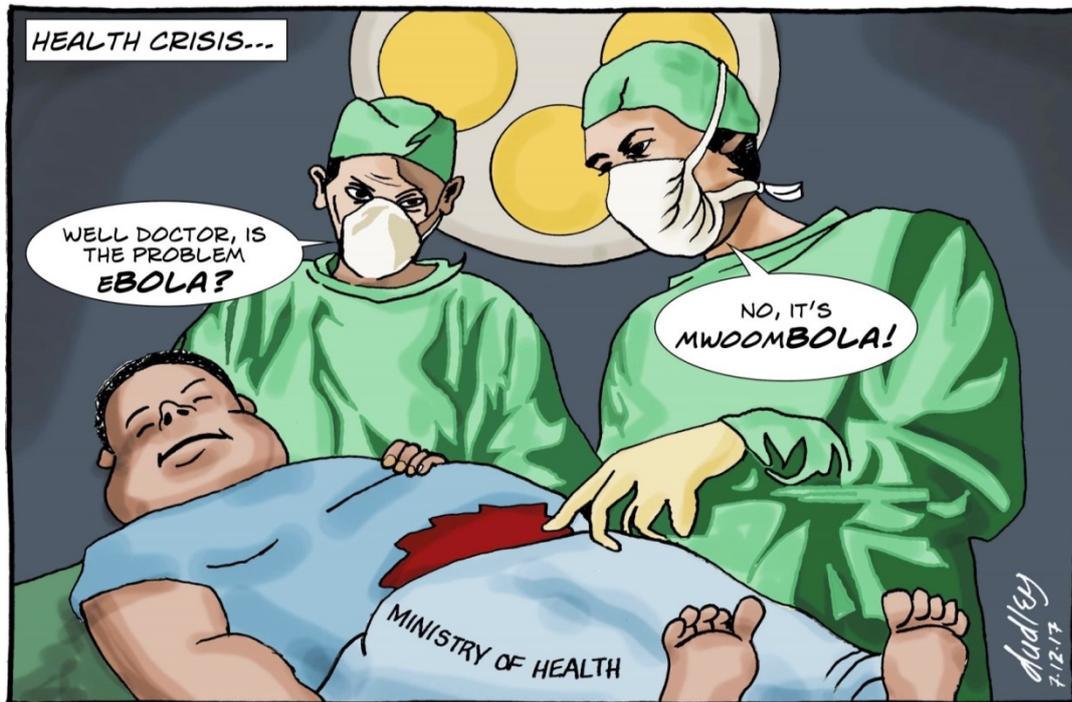
Denotation

The cartoon denotes '*Health Crisis'* as the heading and a man from presumably the Ministry of Health and Social Services lying on a hospital bed. There are also two men wearing green gowns with masks over their mouths, having a conversation about the possible sickness which the patient might be suffering from.

Connotation

The title, 'The Ministry of Health', printed on the patient lying on the bed, connotes trouble at the ministry. As it appears in the figure, the two men in green are supposedly doctors, committed to the diagnosis of their patient, 'The Ministry of Health'. One of them suggests the possibility of '*ebola*', a deadly disease that is difficult to treat (Sanchez et al., 1995). The second doctor however points out that it is 'Mwoom**Bola**', stressing the last part of the person's name, which in this instance is equated to the disease *'ebola'*. The person at the centre of the fiasco is presented by the cartoonist as Andreas Mwoombola, who was the Permanent Secretary in the ministry at the time. The cartoonist intentionally highlights the

last part of his name which sounds similar to the deadly disease in order to single him as the problem. Equally, the doctors in green gowns may portray other stakeholders, including the government, who tried to mediate in order to remedy the situation and end the crisis at the ministry.

From the connotation angle, the cartoon signifies the problematic situation at the Ministry of Health and Social Services. The trouble began when the relationship between the Minister of Health and Social Services, Dr Bernard Haufiku and the Permanent Secretary, Mr Andreas Mwoombola, became sour ('One of us must go,'2017). Their disagreements negatively affected the administration at the various hospitals and the ministry. The two leaders' relationship paralysed most of the services in the health sector.

Politically, the cartoon displays bad blood between leadership, which conforms to the adage, 'when elephants fight the grass suffers'. Leaders put their personal agendas before national needs and interests, hence subjecting the citizens to suffering.

Figure 8: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on smuggled condoms into correctional facilities

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
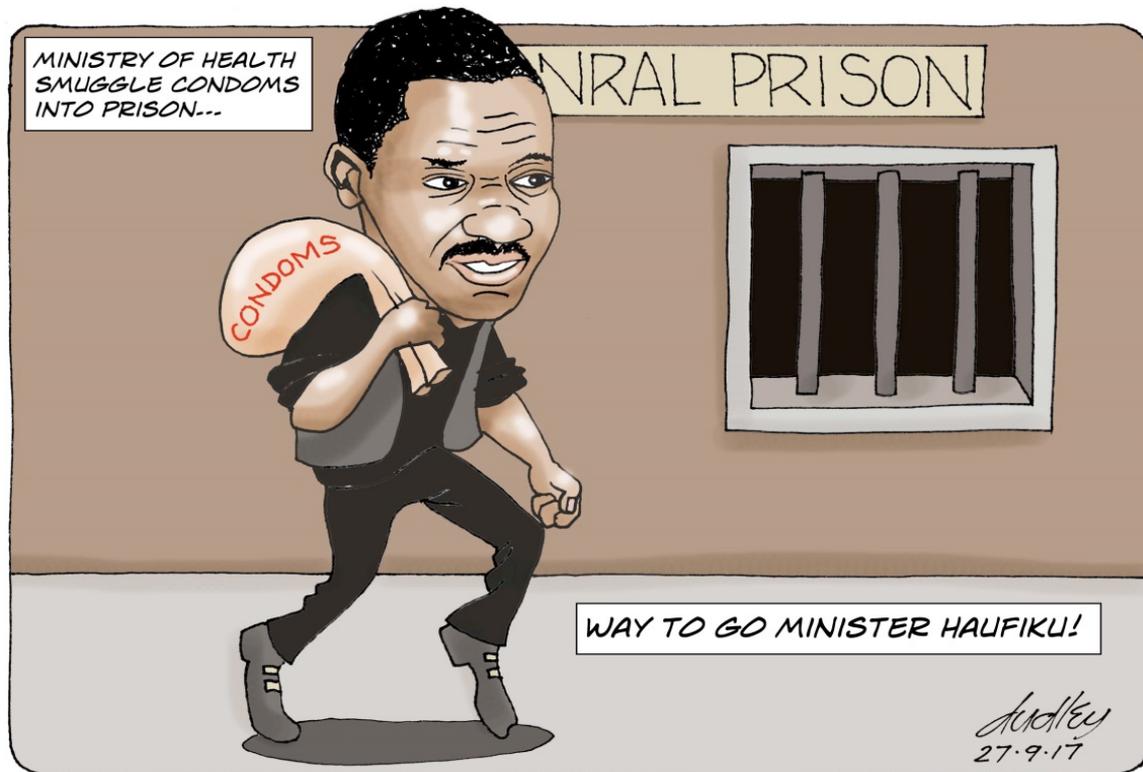
Denotation

The cartoon displays a man in black walking past the central prison. This man is depicted Dr Bernard Haufiku, the then Minister of Health and Social Services, carrying a bag on his shoulders marked '*condoms*'. In the background, which seems to be nighttime, is the building with a window that has burglar bars and a display in big letters, 'Central Prison'. Additionally, the background shows a phrase which explains that the Ministry of Health and Social Services is smuggling condoms into prison, which thus is the correct thing to do.

Connotation

From the connotation perspective, the cartoonist brings forth the serious concern that the Minister of Health and Social Services brought to the attention of the assembly for discussion. The depiction emanates from the media report that revealed high HIV infection rates among Namibian Correctional Services prisoners. Although prisoners are separated according to sex, the HIV prevalence is still high, with new cases being recorded. This indicates that inmates of the same sex have unprotected sex inside the cells. The minister's concern was that prison inmates be provided with condoms in order for them to practice safe sex. Although the appeal was accompanied by statistics as supporting evidence, the idea of providing condoms to prisoners was not supported by most of the fellow lawmakers. It was argued that the Minister of Health and Social Services was advocating for sodomy amongst prisoners, hence the objection to the initiative. Because of the seriousness of the situation and the danger involved, the ministry was left with no choice other than to secretly and illegally smuggle condoms into prison facilities. This is why the cartoonist sarcastically indicates, 'it is the way to go', which means that even though it is illegal, it may be for a good cause because when inmates use condoms during sexual intercourse, it minimizes the risk of them contracting and spreading HIV/AIDS and other STIs. The cartoonist also chose the nighttime background to signify and solidify the issue of smuggling, since the idea had been rejected by fellow lawmakers. Nighttime is symbolical of dark deals and represents unlawfulness, but the minister felt that it was the only way to address the ongoing problem at Namibian correctional facilities.

Figure 9: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on the advocacy for a new parliament building

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
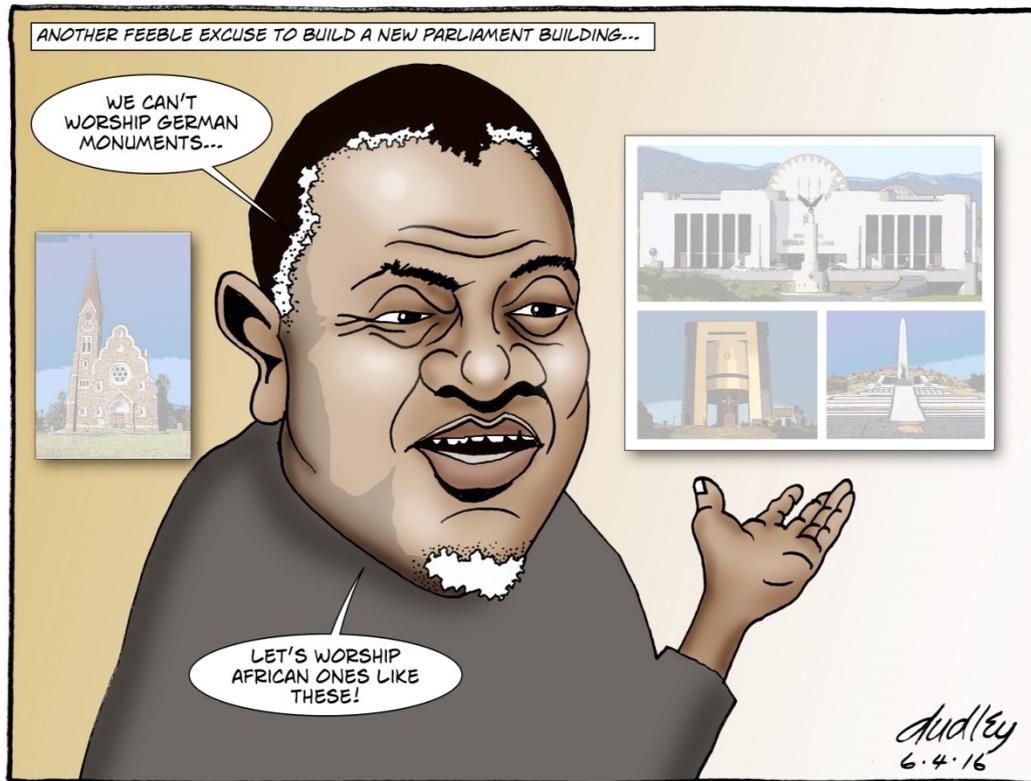
Denotation

The cartoon depicts President Hage Geingob and two different types of architecture in the background. The president's utterance is that as a country 'we can't worship German Monuments' but they have to worship African ones like the one that he is pointing at with his left hand.

Connotation

The cartoonist introduces the caption, '*Another feeble excuse to build a new parliament'* to depict the president's excuses for using the country's limited resources to build a new parliament. The shadowed church in the background is a *Christuskirche* (The Christ Church), a historic landmark found in Windhoek, which was built by Germany during its colonial invasion around 1907 (Christuskirche in Windhoek, n.d.). The cartoonist used the German-built church to represent colonial buildings, while displayed on the left, are the new state

house and the Heroes Acre built by North Koreans after independence. In 2016, there were plans and discussions to build a new parliament and abandon the current one which was built during the colonial era. One of the reasons, amongst others, is that as displayed in the cartoon, that the current parliament has a colonial history. Ironically, the president refers to the North Korean architecture as African buildings, while despising the German ones. The cartoonist relates to the hot debate that sparked discussions and led to objections from some concerned groups. Certain groups and individual members of society expressed the view that considering the financial situation in which the country found itself at the time, it was not ideal to construct a new parliament. The president, through this cartoon, tries to justify the reasons for building a new parliament.

The cartoonist again provokes the reader into thinking further and fills in by using an ellipsis in the cartoon's heading. The president's reasoning may be impractical and it cannot be regarded as a valid excuse to get rid of colonial structures. There are many kinds of infrastructure countrywide, left behind by the colonial administrations which are still in use and they immensely benefit the country. If the government were to demolish all these structures, it would be a massive job or equally impossible to replace them because of the unavailability of resources. Most of the colonial structures are those that house the current government ministries and other divisions, hospitals, schools and many other institutions. A different reason could have been used to justify the need for a new parliament building, but not because the current one has a colonial architecture in style. The cartoonist's focus on this image is on the president and how he handles the affairs of the country. The next figure also highlights the president's position on the employment state in the country.

Figure 10: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on jobs for comrades
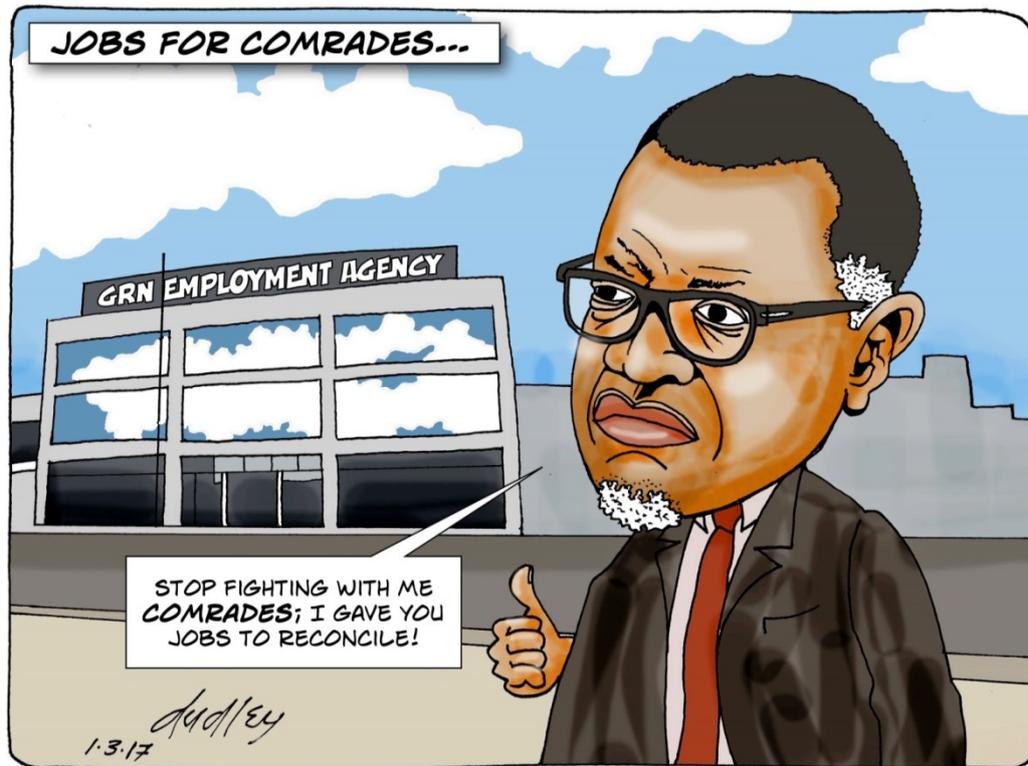
Denotation

The figure illustrates President Hage Geingob standing in front of the building that displays *'GRN EMPLOYMENT AGENCY'* and utterances supposedly uttered by the president, *'Stop fighting with me comrades; I gave you jobs to reconcile'*. The president appears to be addressing an invisible audience.

Connotation

The cartoon connotatively depicts the issue of jobs for 'comrades' in the country. It can be said that there may be people who have been working with Dr Hage Geingob during the days of his campaign before he assumed the presidency. He had promised good jobs as a return favour; they had campaigned for him and had their own expectations of him when he won the presidency. Giving those jobs afterwards, however, seemed unsatisfactory to them

because they expected more than jobs. The cartoonist depicts the dishonesty and non-transparency in Namibian politics, specifically in relation to Hage's '*landslide*' victory in winning the country's presidential elections. The members of the electorate, who are distinguished 'comrades', worked, not out of loyalty but with the expectation of being rewarded hence this issue now comes to haunt the president after taking the office. The reason could be either that he did not fulfill his promises to his so-called 'comrades' or that they simply felt betrayed and kept coming back to the president to demand what they expected. On the other hand, the cartoon affirms the country's outcry about the high unemployment rate and the *'jobs for comrades'.* Jobs are scarce and it is not easy for an ordinary citizen to get a job fairly on merit, unless one is politically connected. The situation may also be related to how the government created many unnecessary positions, for example additional ministries, with some housing two deputy ministers. These are some of the factors that have led to the bloating of the administration and which later led to the economic turmoil.

Politically, the cartoonist portrays a corrupt government whereby government jobs are not easily available to ordinary citizens but only to the politically connected. Additionally, the cartoonist paints a picture of a country's president who favours certain individuals and rewards them with 'jobs for comrades', which paints a picture of non-transparency and corruption in Namibia, and this may not reflect favourably on the president's reputation.

Figure 11: A semiological analysis of political cartoons on North Korean employees in Namibia

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
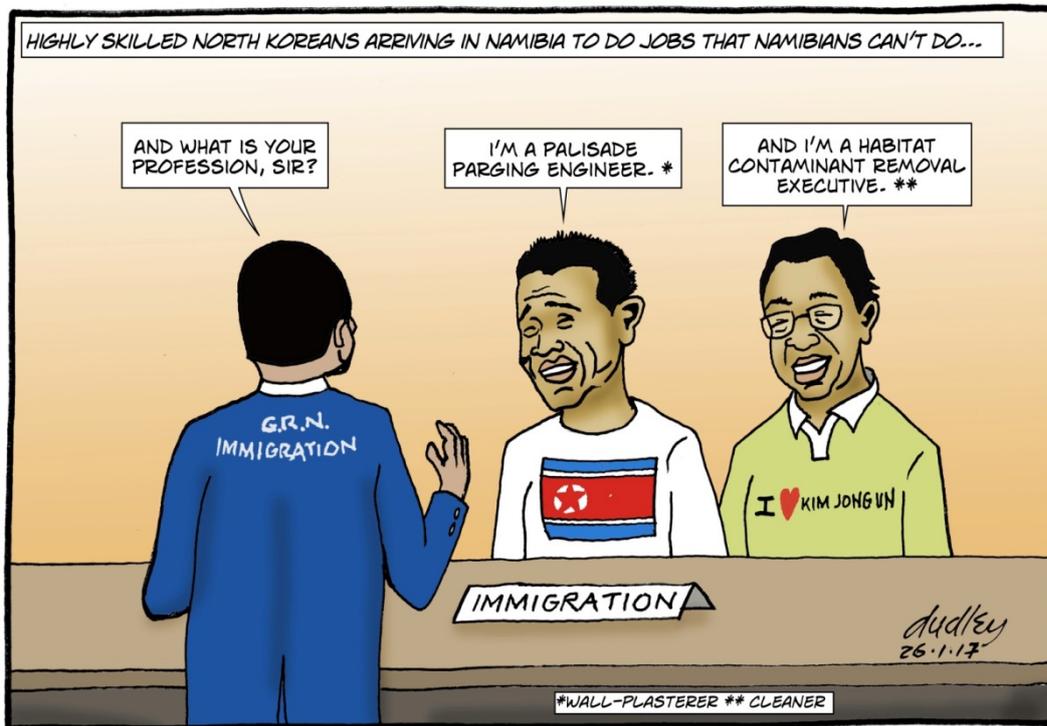
Denotation

Figure 11 above denotes a Namibian government immigration officer speaking to and receiving two men, one wearing a shirt with the North Korean flag and the other man with a jersey written '*I love Kim Johg Un*'. In the background, it also displays '*Highly skilled Koreans arriving in Namibia to do jobs Namibians can't do*…'. Additionally, the immigration officer asks them about their professions and in response, the two men indicated their profession titles.

Connotation

The cartoons relate to the period when a North Korean company was stationed in Namibia to build military headquarters in Windhoek, from the year 2016. The same company was also tasked to do renovations on the Namibian state house. This North Korean company imported experts and also labourers to perform even the most basic jobs like plastering as well as general cleaning. As displayed by the cartoon, the Koreans arrived at the

immigration office and when asked about their professions, they applied fancy professional terminologies to their job description, '*I'm a palisade parging engineer'* and '*I'm a habitat contaminant removal executive'*. The immigrants actually used the fancy terms to describe their job titles, tricking the immigration officer under the impression that they were highly skilled experts that Namibia does not have. The cartoonist chose to present them wearing their country's flag as well as the name of their country's leader to make the cartoon easier to read and to recognize the origin of the people depicted in the picture.

Through the cartoon, the cartoonist implies that Namibian immigration officers may not fully understand what the terminologies entail and do not make an effort to analyse them, but rather grant them work permits. Additionally, anyone, especially foreigners from economically advanced countries may enter the country but the tasked agencies or ministry would not screen them. This compromises the country's laws as the foreigners can start capitalising on the weaknesses of the law and do as it pleases them. There have been complaints from the same North Korean project whereby local labourers received ill-treatment but the government has not been keen to help them (''North Koreans still operating in Namibia", 2017).

Figure 12: A semiological analysis of political cartoons about Namibian Union congress

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php

Denotation

The cartoon presents the title 'Seat searching' and there are three dogs of different colours bearing name tags with abbreviations which stand for the various Namibian labour unions. In the background and behind the dogs, a person passes by, looking at and hearing the dogs which are busy howling and the person makes the utterance, '*Must be congress time again! 'bout the only time the unions howl'.* The dogs' howl is foregrounded by a big yellow sun emerging behind them.

Connotation

The cartoon deplores the culture of the Namibian labour unions. Although there are only two union names; Mine-workers Union Workers of Namibia (MUN) and National Union of Namibian Workers (NUWN), the dogs howling in the picture connote the nature of such unions which are all along considered to have been dormant and inactive with regards to working for the betterment of workers' lives and working conditions. Instead they only come to the fore when the political congress approaches. The big yellow sun in the background symbolizes dawn for the start of a new day. Only when the dogs see the sun emerging do they start to howl because this may bring about change or the appearance of

food. The cartoonist equates the union leaders to such dogs that only wake up when the situation is to their benefit. The yellow sun connotes the new dawn when the congress nears and the unionists come out of their shells, pretending to be concerned about the workers and reaching out to them vocally for their own benefit. The dogs which represent the union leadership are however presented in brown colours, which are perhaps not as bright, to denote their inactivity and that they are dormant throughout the time of their office terms.

 The top union leaders go to the congress on the ticket of the workers, vying for political elevation into the government. The irony which the cartoonist brings forth is that the union leaders sleep while on duty and do not serve the workers as they ought to. The only time they make an effort to be seen as active is when the congress approaches. Dudley portrays that politicians' efforts are only directed towards their personal benefits, like to be voted into offices and then they serve their own interests, as opposed to those of the electorate. Similarities can be observed also from the next cartoons that emerged towards the political campaigns for the SWAPO Congress.

Figure 13: A semiological analysis of political cartoons about 'The political messiahs'

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php

Denotation

The cartoon denotes four SWAPO leaders; Jerry Ekandjo, Helmuth Angula, Nahas Angula and Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana dressed in robes and Jerry Ekandjo is actually carrying a lamb in his hands. The leaders in the picture are ironically equated to the biblical messiah, coming to save the Namibian nation. The lamb carried by the former Minister of Youth, Sport and Culture, Jerry Ekandjo, is biblically regarded as an animal which symbolizes peace, hence the use of the word 'messiahs.' The denoted leaders were members of the SWAPO politburo and stood to campaign for positions within the ruling party structure, mainly for the national elections to be held in 2019 but all lost the elections.

Connotation

Connotatively, this cartoon depicts the political atmosphere during the 2017 SWAPO congress when the party split into two camps namely; Team SWAPO and Harambee team. Both teams comprised mostly of the already serving SWAPO office bearers, including the party president Hage Geingob, who was at the heart of the Harambee camp. In the cartoon,

it is presented ironically as the 'new' messiah that has come to lead Namibia, hence the use of the phrase 'recycled leaders'.

Dudley presents this cartoon by painting the four leaders and equating them to the biblical 'messiahs'. A messiah is known to be a new person and a saviour for the nation. Contrary to this, the word 'new' on the cartoon is marked in quotation marks. To the reader, it paints a different meaning other than that of being really new. Additionally, the background colour as well as that of their lobes is grey. A new 'beginning' is supposedly promising and brings new hope, which could be presented in a much brighter colour. By using a dull colour, the cartoonist gives a message of despair and that even though the leaders seem to be promising a new dawn; it is not really the case as they have failed to institute such change during their previous reigns since independence.

The portrayal is also that although the members of this team claim to be on a mission to save or transform Namibia, they have been part of the regime from its inception. It is however ironic to emerge out with such promises when they have been part and parcel of the government's laws and administration. They are equally responsible for the wrongs they claim that they would like to change. The carton paints the picture that although leaders claim to bring change; they do not deliver to their promises. They are equally the same, interested in having the power and not necessarily serving the electorate as per their promises. The cartoonist presents the word 'new' in quotation marks to bring to the reader's attention that although these leaders brand themselves new, they are indeed not and it is misleading to call them as such. The introductory sentence *'recycled leaders'* is meant to show that these old guards have been around and repeatedly formed part of the government. It is therefore far from imperative to believe that they will deliver differently; in fact the implication is that even if the leaders in the picture get into power again, the status quo remains.

Figure 14: A semiological analysis of political cartoons about rebranding of the Popular Democratic Movement party

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
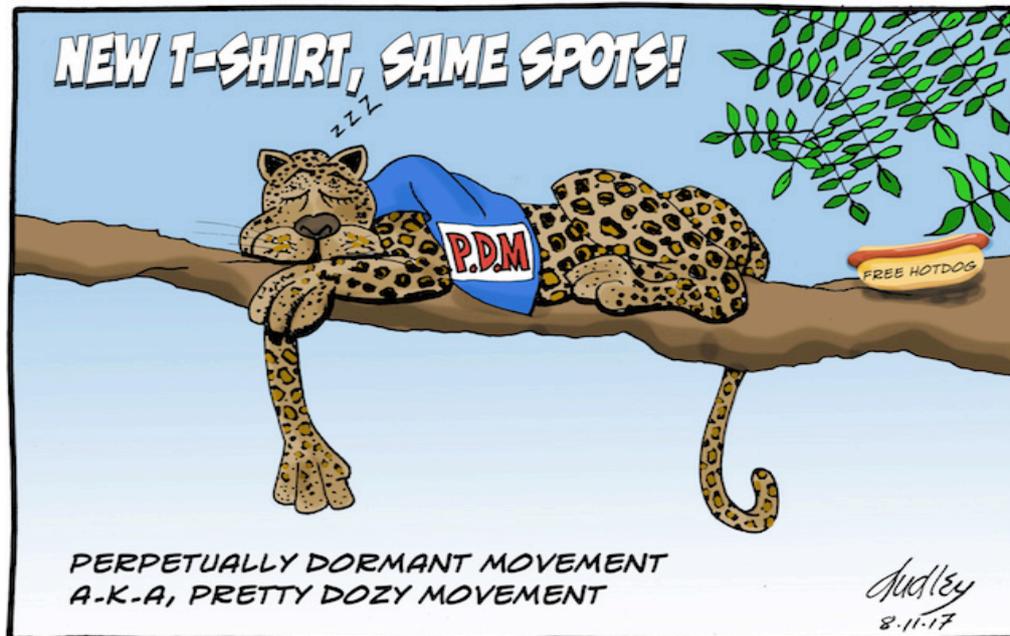
Denotation

The figure displays a spotted leopard resting on a tree, wearing a t-shirt branded PDM, the Namibian official political opposition party. The cartoon introduces the caption, *'new t-shirt, same* spots'. The caption also reads, *'perpetually dormant movement, A.K.A, pretty dozy movement'*. Next, on the same branch, is a free hot dog that is placed near the resting and dozing animal.

Connotation

In 2017, the Namibian political landscape was filled with a lot of activities but the main ones focused more on the rebranding of the official opposition, Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) to the Popular Democratic Movement (PDM). DTA was formed at pre-independence, as a result of the Turnhalle Constitutional Conference held in Windhoek from 1975 to 1977, as a counterbalance and main opposition to SWAPO. The name change was a party effort, hoping that the re-branding would be a redress that would detach the party from its colonial and apartheid association and possibly contribute to an increase in the membership

base. The increase in the membership base was crucial to the party when it undertakes its hopes and dreams in order to make a mark during the 2019 elections.

The cartoonist chose to use an animal, which is in the form of a leopard that lazily lies on the branch of a tree. The choice of the animal cements the expression that says, '*A leopard cannot change its spots'*. Connotatively, in this depiction, the cartoonist wishes to paint a picture of a superficial rebranding since most of the party's aspects have not been changed. The t-shirt worn by the leopard has three colours mainly; blue, red and white, which are the old colours of DTA and which have not been changed, similar to the way that a leopard does not change it spots. It is evident from the depiction that despite the name change, the political party structure, ideologies and its way of conducting itself towards the national agenda remains the same; hence the name change remains insignificant. The phrase '*perpetually dormant movement, A.K.A, pretty dozy movement'* signifies that, PDM being the Namibian official opposition party is barely active. The party is presented as not vigilant enough to be on the lookout for the political environment but rather it is dormant and a recipient of the state funds that it receives from the state without delivering to the electorate. The free hotdog is a connotation of state funds allocated to political bodies to carry out their activities as per their mandate. In this case, Dudley presents the opposition party through receiving such funds as actually having a 'free lunch'.

One would think that in a complete overhaul, the colours as well as the logo should have changed, hence the cartoonist's use of the leopard that cannot change its spots, irrespective of circumstances. Politically, the reader can interpret the cartoon, as a party rebranding that is insignificant and which does not change the party's status quo.

Figure 15: A semiological analysis of political cartoons about 'National Council lazy day'

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php

Denotation

The figure displays a title, '*Today in the National Council… Nothing happened*'". In the picture are different people, men and women in different coloured clothing, each one in their own world in dreamland. Although seated in rows, no one seems to speak to the other, but there are speech bubbles coming from each member of the national council. The walls of the national council are covered by blue curtains.

Connotation

The cartoon lampoons a Namibian house of lawmakers that are not up to their duties. These are supposedly servants of the electorate that are expected to go to the national council to debate on issues that affect the country or work on laws that govern and protect all Namibians. On the contrary, it appears that there is no work taking place because as the figure displays, each of these lawmakers is deep asleep and dreaming, while some are thinking of their own business such as '*buying more taxis*'. One of them thinks, '*I hope they have beds in the new parliament building*'. This statement relates to the previously

proposed new parliament building that most of the parliamentarians wanted built as from 2015. The idea was, however, objected to by individuals and concerned groups, mostly the youth who felt that the country was experiencing an economic difficulty, hence advised it to be either postponed or halted. The new parliament, which was planned and expected to be luxuriously built, was therefore halted. The cartoonist here wants to present the picture that Namibian lawmakers are not serious and do not live up to their duties. They claim to go to work but simply go and relax and do not care about the citizens. They get paid good salaries for simply sitting in the house and dozing, thinking of their holiday destinations in places like Dubai. The speech bubbles displayed for most of them shows that they are either in their own world, making personal plans or wishes or simply dozing off and not debating as they are supposed to. The cartoonist has intentionally used different colours to ensure that the audience's attention is well-captured and that the reader can notice the action in the national council.

Politically, this paints a bad picture of the country. If the lawmakers do not take their work seriously, it compromises the country's governance. As top office bearers, they hold the reputation of the government as they are supposed to be exemplary to the citizens. Looking at a figure like this may negatively affect the citizens' or public servants' performance because they look up to the top office bearers for inspiration, but instead they may as well inherit such a culture of laziness.

Figure 16: A semiological analysis of political cartoons about the struggle for power and recognition

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php

Denotation

The cartoon shows two boys wearing SWAPO branded garments with SWAPO colours, fighting for office keys. It also displays a heading, 'The oldest kid in town just doesn't know when he's beaten'.

Connotation

The cartoon depicts the fight between Elijah Ngurare, the former SWAPO Youth League Secretary General, and the incoming party youth leadership, under the leadership of Veikko Nekundi. This came at a period when Ngurare and other youth wing members were ousted from their executive positions. Ngurare and the trio felt and claimed that the dismissal, particularly his, as a SWAPO Youth League Secretary, was unconstitutional. Although the new leadership had to resume youth office duties, he felt that he was still the legitimate

secretary general of the youth wing, since he was lawfully elected to the office. He believed that he was still the legitimate Secretary General of the SWAPO Youth League and should be in office. He therefore wrote to the then acting SPYL Acting Secretary General, Veikko Nekundi, at the time; "I should like to meet you at the SPYL national headquarters before 29 April 2017 so that you can hand over the office keys" (''SPYL fight gets vicious'', 2017). The display says '*the oldest kid*.' And this phrase is meant to imply that Ngurare was no longer regarded as a youth because constitutionally in Namibia, a person is only considered a youth until the age of 35. In this case, in 2017, Dr Ngurare was already 46 years old and no longer eligible for the position of the secretary general in the youth office. The statement above, '*Kids fighting over the office key*' implies the state of being childish in this situation. As youth, they are supposed to have matured enough to handle the situation maturely and have a smooth office handover instead of resorting to political fights.

The cartoon above depicts similar characteristics to the next figure in which two groups with roots traced from the liberation struggle feel neglected and are seeking for recognition. While this cartoon presents the theme of power struggle, similarly the next image depicts the need for recognition and credibility.

Figure 17: A semiological analysis of political cartoons about the struggle for credibility

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
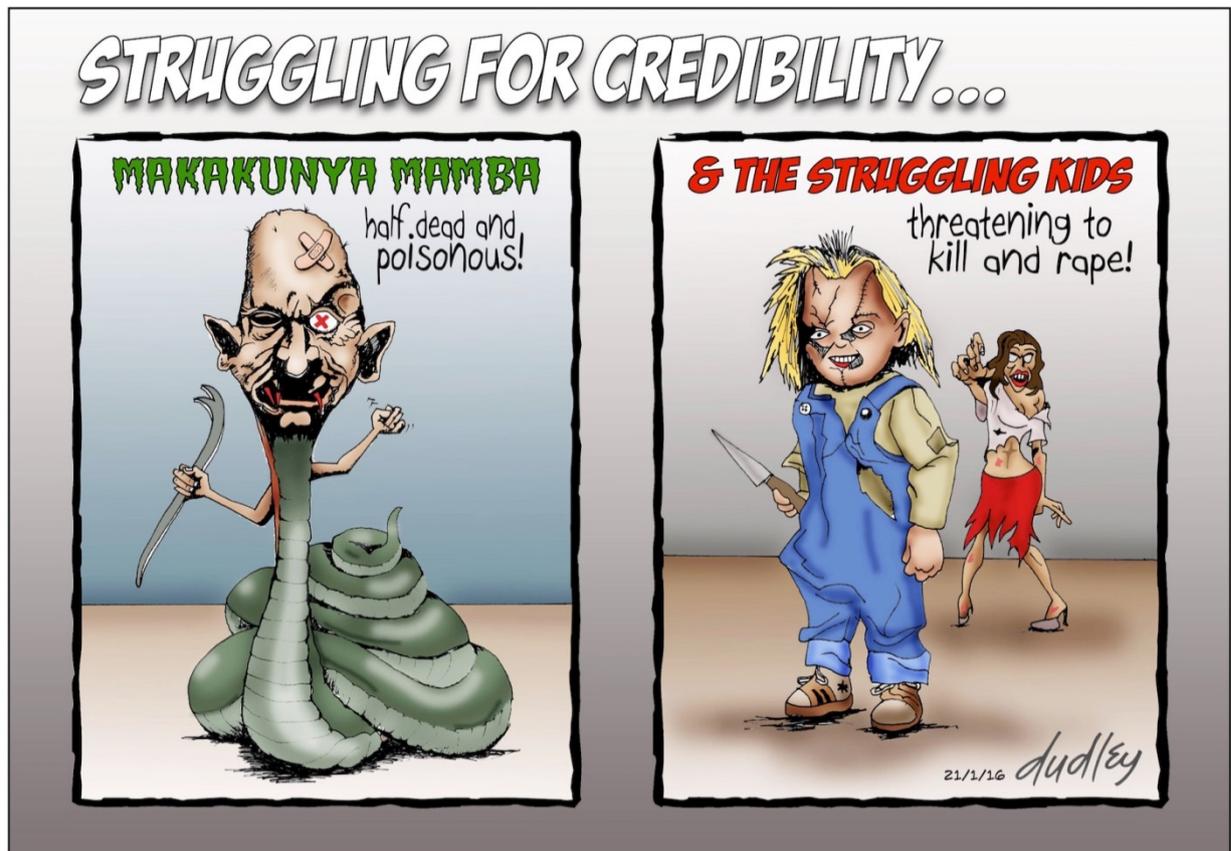
Denotation

Struggling for credibilty - the image denotes a snake all tangled up but with its head poised for a strike. The snake that only has one eye has a head that resembles that of a human being. The cartoonist has portrayed the snake as *'Mkakunya Mamba', half, dead and poisonous'.* Next to the mamba is a display of '*the struggling kids, threatening to kill and rape'*. The man (kid) in blue overalls is armed with a knife and his face shows aggression.

Connotation

The cartoon depicts the '*aftermath'* of the liberation struggle. The word *'makakunya'* is derogatory for former South African colonial soldiers also known as the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF). The cartoonist draws the two; *'makakunya mambas and the struggling kids'* parallel to each other to portray their similarities. The two groups presented

their demands to the government; where the former soldiers demanded to be accorded with war veteran status and the benefits this comes with, similar to their former People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) counterparts. The former SWATF soldiers claimed that they were part of the war too hence they are entitled to the same compensation given to the former PLAN ex-combatants. The cartoonist equates them to a mamba, a dangerous snake that is half dead but still poisonous. The connotation to be derived from this is that the type of threat they direct towards the sitting government should not be taken lightly. Even though they are not at war, they are retired but trained soldiers hence they may pose a danger and disrupt the country's peace because they feel neglected.

In comparison to the former soldiers, parallel to the '*makakunya mambas*' are '*struggling kids, threatening to kill and rape*'. The cartoon depicts the 'struggle kids' in torn clothes and their faces display anger. They equally, like the former soldiers, are in the 'struggle for credibility' category, and they are portrayed as dangerous if not attended to. The struggle kids have been demanding employment from the government, claiming that most of them are orphans because of the war for liberation and that they have no one to take care of their education. They camped at different government offices, including the ruling party SWAPO offices countrywide, in an effort to have their demands met. As displayed in the cartoon, the group grew impatient and started terrorising ordinary citizens in the surroundings where they camped, in an effort to feed themselves.

The cartoonist depicts the problem faced by the government, which resulted from the war and which has not been addressed on time, thereby perpetually threatening the country's political peace and stability. The message that the cartoonist would like to convey is for the government to take the matter as a serious one and which, if not addressed, may lead to unpleasant consequences.

Figure 18: A semiological analysis of political cartoons about information provision

Source: https://www.namibian.com.na/index.php
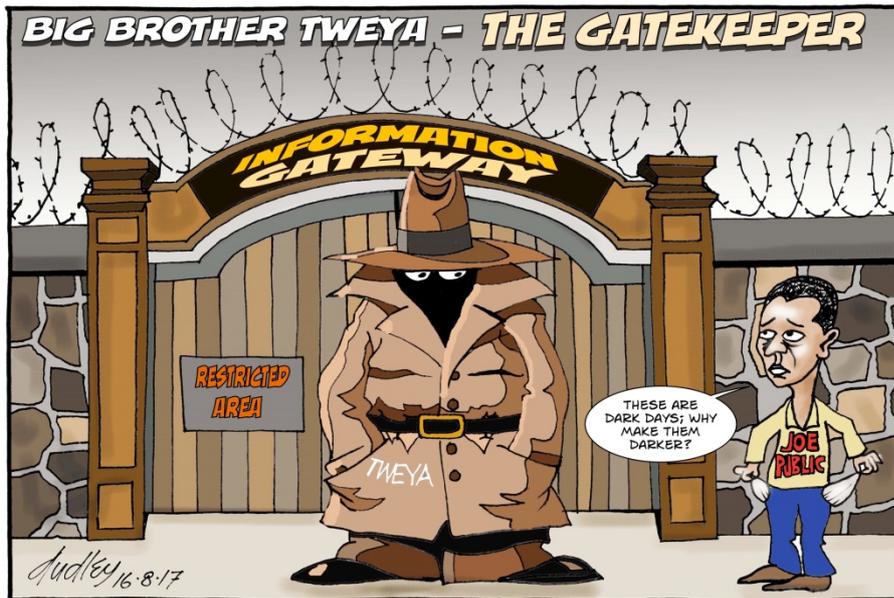
Denotation

The cartoon denotes a heading, 'Big brother Tweya- The gatekeeper'. He stands in front of a high gate which is locked and tightly secured with barbed wiring. The man, Tweya, who is heavily guarding the information gate, is approached by an ordinary 'Joe Public' who urges him not to make the current dark days darker.

Connotation

The figure portrays a contradictory picture of Namibia, a country that guarantees freedom of press and the availing of information to the public as enshrined in the country's constitution. The cartoon portrays Tjekero Tweya, the Minister of Information, who is seemingly acting as a gatekeeper, keeping and denying information from the public.

Politically, it can be derived from the given figure that when politicians are not willing to freely avail information to the media or are uncomfortable about doing so, they deny the public the right to information by withholding it and keeping it from the media. This translates into a violation of the country's constitution which grants freedom of expression

because Article 21 of the Constitution stipulates; "All persons shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media" (The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, p. 12).

Relating to the given cartoon, this is where democracy must prove true and show the indispensable value of freedom of speech. The access to, and flow of information is relentless, which means that opinion makers must make sure that they are heard. One way to do this is to be controversial, to push the very limits of where the boundaries of freedom of expression are. This is what makes lawmakers, especially the politicians, sceptical about availing information. Additionally, their controversial conducts, including corruption acts, hinder the availability of information, which may lead to exposure. Any media outlet will always reflect the interests of its owners and advertisers above all else, hence the hesitation sometimes from the politicians in freely availing information. They sometimes fear that it might invite readers to voice their opinions, and be forced to act opportunistically, as there always is an agenda behind their actions. Everything is framed and selected. This means that freedom of expression in the media is always a qualified and limited entity, subject to the general stance or agenda of the respective media corporation, and then in turn subject to an ad hoc evaluation by an editor. Although the media certainly claims to be both the eyes and ears of the public, it is also in the business of making money and being driven by corporate interests. This duality becomes fundamental in the controversial instances of the published cartoons that this research deals with.

4.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter, various political cartoons were presented and analysed, following the Barthesian tenets of semiology. Namibian political cartoons vary in terms of the themes they present to the reader and therefore present a dynamic perspective on the Namibian political landscape. The semiological analysis on the eighteen editorial cartoons presents the denotative and connotation meanings, derived from different features as they appear on the displayed figures. Although the cartoons presented in this chapter are all political by

nature, they present separate political themes and therefore were analysed as separate units.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to analyse eighteen (18) of Dudley's political cartoons using the Barthesian semiology approach, by unearthing their meanings at a connotative and denotative level. The political cartoons covered in the study form part of many others which serve as the mirror, through which Namibian politics can be viewed. This chapter discusses the findings, conclusions and recommendations on the selected political cartoons in relation to three research objectives that form the basis of this study, namely to:

- analyse the meaning of selected editorial cartoons using semiology;
- interpret the meaning of the selected political cartoons at connotative and denotative levels; and
- present how the Namibian political landscape is depicted through Dudley's cartoons.

5.2 Findings

 Findings of this study demonstrate how Dudley's political cartoons are used in the media discourse to depict and display the Namibian political image. This study addressed three objectives; firstly, by considering the selected political cartoons, the study interpreted each cartoon, presenting its meaning based on a denotative and also a connotative level. Through interpretation, various political themes were revealed and brought forth for the attention of the readers to present both a view and reflection through which the country's' political landscape is mirrored.

Looking at all the figures as presented in this study, it is evident that the cartoonist does not only present pictures alone but combines them with words in order to supplement and strengthen the message contained in the cartoon. Equally, the cartoons are presented in different colours, mostly bright, to ensure that they catch the attention of the reader. In this case, in paging through the newspaper, a reader can hardly miss sight of Dudley's cartoons.

Interestingly, this study presents substantive issues depicted from the analysed cartoons. The researcher ensured that cartoons with similar themes are presented closely together to link up the similarity. The themes presented are such as corruption which deals with dishonesty and fraud or financial scandals, especially among political leaders and prominent public officers. Political in-fighting, misuse of state resources, power struggles, misplaced priorities in terms of resources allocation, waste of state resources, and the compromise of the country's laws, amongst others, constitutes the total cartoon samples. There is also an element of unequal distribution of the country's resources which focuses on how the nation's resources are managed and how they cater for the well-being of the citizens and the mismanagement of such resources.

The cartoons show that the Namibian government as depicted in the figures does not use the public resources wisely and that it has misplaced its priorities. One can relate to figure 3 and 4 where it appears that the government spends money recklessly because it has among others bloated the cabinet plus many other divisions that are not relevant and do not address the plight of the citizens. State owned enterprises are mostly highlighted as the most wasteful sector whereby they spend money allocated to them without care.

Another theme that is notable is the struggle for power and recognition by the political leaders and individual groups of the society. Figures 12-17 are highlighted by the cartoonist. Dudley in these cartoons shows how Namibian political leaders are fond of power but not a good representation of the masses. They sit on their responsibilities yet want to cling to power, even when their terms end. With time they keep promising the electorate of the new changes that are hardly realised. Instances such as the rebranding of the PDM political party, the union leaders and 'The Messiahs' are events that come to the fore when elections are approaching, so that the same leaders can retain their bread again. They would be elected to offices and get back to their habits as reflected in figure 15, whereby the whole house is gone to sleep, instead of debating on national issues and effecting laws that are about the welfare of the citizens. These topical issues were encapsulated in Dudley's political cartoons. They display the political landscape of Namibia during the chosen crucial period, which is aimed at initiating social and political reforms in a given society.

It can also be concluded that *The Namibian* newspaper has a wider coverage on many issues in Namibia and beyond. Despite this, it can however be derived from the analysed cartoons that although there are other themes that may be political in nature, the cartoonist seems to be interested in and targets mostly the political office bearers.

Most of the political cartoons presented by Dudley paint a negative connotation from the government perspective. Could it be concluded that the government is entirely a bad one and does not have any form of positive performance worth highlighting? One can relate this to the role of media houses, especially privately owned, in setting an agenda and serving the interests of their funders (Sani et al., 2012). They are much significant in reorienting the people pertaining to relevant issues that are important to the public. The themes discussed in this study can therefore be considered to be substantive because they reflect topical and sensitive issues of national interest which concern and worry the people, hence they constitute the social agenda of the moment.

Through political cartoons, the media comments on the current socio-political issues in order to keep the readers informed and abreast of topical issues that affect their lives on a daily basis. Additionally, the cartoons illustrate a great focus on specific issues of interest at a particular moment through recurrent and wide coverage of such issues. The role of the media, and specifically that of a cartoonist in influencing the perception of the semiotic reader, is significant in reorienting people pertaining to relevant issues that are important to the public's interest.

Through viewing political images, the cartoonist may influence what readers are interested in and pay attention to. Their interest may be in the country's political governance or any other issue pertaining or affecting the country's development, specifically the livelihood of the citizens. Therefore, the cartoonist attaches relevance to issues through wide coverage, thereby giving them popularity and constituting useful debates that shape people's understanding of such issues as a step forward in solving societal problems.

The cartoons at the centre of this study are encapsulated in recurrent coverage as a way of setting the agenda through which worthiness and prominence of issues and events are

portrayed to the public. Semiologically, the study conforms to the principles of semiology that the Barthesian approach does not recognize the oneness of meanings because the text needs deep reading in order to provide multiple meanings which become an infinite number of connotations. Therefore, the text in this sense becomes a great linguistic body related to significance.

Lastly, this study has demonstrated how political cartoons are used to accomplish communicative tasks in the Namibian print media. Equally, it has shown how editorial cartoons, as powerful tools, are creatively used to unravel issues, thereby providing political commentary and debate in a witty and artful fashion through which social realities are mirrored in the nation's wider socio-political arena. Therefore, the study has shown that the cartoon genre constitutes a formidable medium of communication through which the media displays the political sphere by attaching relevance to issues and events. This is done through the recurrent coverage aimed at shaping the people's understanding of the issues to bring about positive change in society. Thus, Namibian political cartoons serve as an open mirror used by the media, specifically to generate public attention, reorient people and initiate social and political reform in Namibia.

5.3 Conclusions

Semiology analysis is not about offering a value judgement about the observed signs whereby semioticians present their analyses as if they were completely objective accounts rather than giving subjective interpretations. In practice, semiotic analysis invariably consists of individual readings since signs may have many different subjective meanings that arise from each individual's personal experience. These connotations of the signs are not purely personal meanings as they are determined by codes (e.g., cultural codes) to which the interpreter has access (Chandler, 2007). In other words, in the case of connotation, an interaction occurs when the sign and the feelings of the reader meet. Here, meanings move towards a subjective interpretation of the sign. However, the fact that the same text may well elicit a different meaning for another analyst does not devalue semiology because it is

about enriching readers' understanding of the text. In this regard, the current study presents possible interpretations that potentially have connotations, and thus minimizes the impact of bias on generating interpretations that can either be agreed on or rejected by other interpreters. In semiological analysis, the object of the analysis is considered to be a texture or text which is hypothetically established through relationships between various conceived elements.

The value of signs in the information age has indeed become a way of disseminating messages. Cartoons in particular provide a unique opportunity to probe political attitudes. They powerfully condense, simplify and distill political thoughts and opinions. Political cartoons in particular serve as a running commentary on social change and in many instances seek to provoke a reassessment of existing social attitudes and values. For the most part, political cartoons highlight and comment on what cartoonists believe to be the significant news of the day, with the aim of influencing the reader to adopt a particular point of view and predispose him or her to a particular course of action.

Political cartoons condense a complex idea into one striking and memorable image. Images are open to many interpretations that are mainly associated with the social and political background of the semiotic reader. Appreciating this distinctive form of artistic expression is not therefore, simply a matter of finding them amusing only but more about understanding the context of the issue addressed, identifying the perspective of the cartoonist, and agreeing or disagreeing with that perspective.

The interpretation of messages from cartoons, especially when done semiologically, is only possible when readers keep abreast with current affairs, as in that way they can easily understand such signs. If the readers do not understand the cartoon or have no background information on the issue depicted, it may not appeal to their emotions. In other words, cartoons are just a communicative form of adding fuel to the fire, which tells a great deal about what is happening in our society, by using a single depiction and few words.

5.4 Recommendations

Generally, the political cartoon genre contributes to the understanding of the media representation of issues, people and events. Through Barthes' semiology, the genre also offers a useful source of data for studying and understanding media and public discourse. Hence, it is a potent and interesting research area of understanding social relationships and experiences. For this reason, there is a need for further research, specifically in Namibia, to determine the effect of political cartoons in initiating social and political reforms in society. Given that the cartoons are communicative and social artifacts, future studies should also focus on the feasibility of political cartoons towards understanding different social phenomenon and how they can be harnessed to build and shape public opinion.

The value of signs in the information age has indeed become a powerful way of disseminating messages. Signs are so critical that communication between the readers and producers of these sources are undeniably powerful in changing and shaping as well as constructing mental images and controlling perceptions of the readers. Given that there is little scholarly engagement in this field, there is a call for more studies, specifically in Namibia. While this study has done a semiological analysis of Namibian political cartoons, it is not exhaustive. Scholarly attention should be paid to this field, to increase awareness of the importance of cartoons as a genre and as a discourse that contributes to the shaping of society. Limited scholarly engagement in the field of cartoon analysis is evidently proof that cartoons remain a relatively less popular discourse in Namibia, because they have hardly been explored. This study therefore recommends further exploration of the field of Namibian cartoons to unearth this rich segment and broaden knowledge as well as increase readership awareness of the importance of understanding this rich and interesting branch of the media. Finally, the researcher highly recommends that future research needs to be conducted, specifically in Namibia where this genre is narrowly explored. The study should be carried out on the views and opinions of audiences on the significance of political cartoons in their lives.

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Appendix A

NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (F-REC) **APPLICATION FORM FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH/DATA COLLECTION**				
NB: This form should be prepared by the researcher and student researcher in consultation with supervisor/promotor) and attached to the actual research proposal, and submitted to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee				
Full name of researcher: Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms/Other:				
Department & Faculty of Researcher: e.g. Health Sciences/ Health and Applied Sciences				
Title of research project:				
If a registered NUST student, indicate degree programme:				
NUST staff or student number:				
Supervisor/promotor (if applicable): Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms/other:				
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	**Yes**	**NS***	**No**	**ACTION REQUIRED**
1. Familiarity with ethical codes of conduct				
As researcher, I have familiarised myself with the professional code(s) of ethics and guidelines for ethically responsible research relevant to my field of study as specified in the list herewith attached, AND the policy for the assurance and promotion of ethically accountable research at NUST	✔			If YES: Continue with the checklist. If NS/NO: Researcher must do so before proceeding.
2. The proposed research: (Proceed with the whole of Section 2)				
a) Involves gathering information directly from human subjects (individuals or groups) (e.g. by means of questionnaires, interviews, observation of subjects or working with personal data)	Yes	NS	No ✔	If YES: Continue with the checklist. If NO: This checklist process does not apply to the proposed research, except if 2 (b) applies.
b) Involves gathering information directly from companies, corporations, organisations, NGOs, government departments etc. that <u>is not</u> available in the public domain			✔	If YES: Continue with the checklist. If NO: This checklist process does not apply to the proposed research.
C 1) Is linked to or part of a bio-medical research project C2) Is linked to or part of nuclear/radio-active research project C3) Is linked to biotechnological research project e.g. GMOs, Environmental Nanotech research etc.			✔	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance will be required.
d) Involves gathering of information without consent/assent, i.e. will be conducted without the knowledge of the subjects of/participants in the research	✔			If YES/NS: F-REC clearance will be required.
e) Involves collection of identifiable information about people from available records/archival material to be collected on individuals/groups/lists with personal information			✔	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance will be required.

* NS = Not sure/Don't know

** Please note: If the "No" option is selected it does not nullify the responsibility that rests on the researcher to ensure that ethical research practices are followed throughout the research process. The onus rests on the researcher to ensure that, should any ethical issues arise throughout the research process, the necessary steps

are taken to minimise and report these risks to the supervisor/promotor of the study (where relevant/applicable), the Departmental Head , and the F-REC. Furthermore: If the "No" option is chosen it does not absolve the researcher to seriously consider the possible risk that the research can in some way wrongfully disadvantage research participants and/or stakeholders or deny them fundamental rights.

3. The proposed research involves the gathering of information from people in the following categories:				
a) Minors (persons under 18 years of age)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS for any of these categories (a-f): F-REC clearance will be required. The committee must screen the proposal/project and may seek further external clarification if the ethical risk is assessed as medium or high.
b) People with disabilities			✔	
c) People living with/affected by HIV/AIDS			✔	If NO for all of these categories: Continue with the checklist.
d) Prisoners			✔	
e) Other category deemed vulnerable; SPECIFY here: [See Glossary of SOP for definitions.]			✔	
f) NUST staff, students or alumni	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance must be obtained. Complete the checklist and submit to the committee. If NO: Continue with the checklist.
4. Assessment of risk of potential harm as a result of the research (tick ONE appropriate YES or NS box)				
a) **Minimal risk** (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES: Established ethical standards apply. Proceed to 5, 6 and 7 and completion of checklist. If NO/NS: Proceed to 4b).
b) **Low risk** (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS: Established ethical standards apply; further assessment may be carried out by F-REC. Proceed to 5, 6 and 7 and completion of checklist. If NO: Continue with the checklist.
c) **Medium risk** (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance must be obtained; further assessment/ clarification may be carried out by F-REC. Proceed to 5, 6 and 7 and completion of checklist. If NO: continue with the checklist.
d) **High risk** (for a classification of risk types, and definition, see Glossary and Addendum 3 in REC SOP)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS: F-REC clearance must be obtained; further assessment/clarification may be carried out by F-REC. Proceed to 5, 6 and 7 and completion of checklist. If NO: Continue with the checklist.
5. The proposed research involves processes regarding the selection of participants in the following categories:				
a) Participants that are subordinate to the person doing the recruitment for the study	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES: REC clearance may be required. If NO: Continue with the checklist.
b) Third parties are indirectly involved because of the person being studied (e.g. family members of HIV patients, parents or guardians of minors, friends)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES: REC clearance may be required. If NO: Continue with the checklist.

6. Steps to ensure established ethical standards are applied (regardless of risk assessment)				
a) **Informed consent**: Appropriate provision has been/will be made for this (either written or oral)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES: Provide evidence together with the submitted proposal. Continue with checklist.
b) **Voluntary participation:** Respondents/informants will be informed, inter alia, they have the right to refuse to answer questions and to withdraw from participation at any time			✔	If NS/NO: Attach/provide justification for further assessment and advice.
c) **Privacy**: Steps will be taken to ensure personal data of informants will be secured from improper access	✔			
d) **Confidentiality and anonymity:** Confidentiality of information and anonymity of respondents/informants will be maintained unless explicitly waived by respondent.	✔			This should be reflected in the evidence of 'informed consent' or as reflected in the research instrument
e) **Training:** research assistants/ fieldworkers will be used to collect data, and ethics awareness will be included in their training			✔	
f) **Mitigation of potential risk**: Likelihood that mitigation of risk of harm to participants is required, is at medium/high, and appropriate steps have been/will be taken (e.g. referral for counselling)	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS: Develop protocols for submission to F-REC. Continue with checklist. If NO: Proceed with checklist.
g) **Access:** Institutional permission is required to gain access to participants and has been/will be secured. Specify here from whom: [If the permission letter required is available, submit it to the DESC. If it is not available, apply for it immediately and indicate to the DESC when it will be expected.]	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES: Develop application for authorisation, clear with DESC & apply. Continue with checklist. If NS: Refer proposal to DESC for assessment and advice. Continue to 6 (h). If NO: Proceed to 6 (h).
h) **Accountability research***: Institutional permission to gain access to participants poses an obstacle to conduct the research.	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS: Refer proposal to F-REC for assessment and advice. Continue with checklist. If NO: continue with checklist.
i) **Public availability of instruments to gather data**: [When applicable] Are the instruments that will be used to gather data available in the public domain?	**Yes** ✔	**NS**	**No**	If YES or not applicable: proceed with checklist. If NS/NO: Obtain permission to use the instrument(s) and submit letters of permission with the proposal to DESC for assessment and advice Continue with checklist..
j) **Use of psychological tests**: [When applicable] Are the instruments that will be used to gather data classified by law as psychological tests?	**Yes**	**NS**	**No** ✔	If YES/NS: Indicate who will administer these tests, and whether they are appropriately registered and adequately trained to do so. Provide registration number and professional body. Continue with checklist. If NO or not applicable: Proceed with checklist.
k) **Protecting data from unauthorised access**: Are appropriate measures in place to protect data from unauthorized access? If yes, specify what the measures are:	**Yes** ✔	**NS**	**No**	If YES: Specify and proceed with checklist. (**to be kept in lockable cabinets in the office department**)

	Yes	NS	No	
l) **Unexpected information**: If unexpected, unsolicited data is revealed during the process of research, data will be kept confidential and will only be revealed if required by law.	✔			If YES: Proceed with checklist. If NO/NS: Consult on this matter with F-REC for further guidance. Continue with checklist.
m) **Emergency situations**: If an unexpected emergency situation is revealed during the research, whether it is caused by my research or not, it will immediately be reported to my supervisor/promotor and Departmental Chair for further advice.	✔			If YES: Proceed with checklist. If NO/NS: Consult on this matter with F-REC. Continue with checklist.
n) **Permission to use archival data**: [When applicable] Is permission granted from the custodian of the archive to use it.	✔			If YES: Proceed with checklist. If NO/NS: Consult on this matter with F-REC. Continue with checklist.
o) **The archive itself does not pose problems**: [When applicable] The initial conditions under which the archive originated allow you as a third party researcher to use the material in the archive.	✔			If YES, proceed with checklist. If NO/NS: Consult on this matter with F-REC. Continue with checklist.
7. Conflict of interest				
Is the researcher aware of any actual or potential conflict of interest in his/her proceeding with this research?	Yes	NS	No ✔	If YES/NS: Identify concerns, attach details of steps to manage them, and refer to F-REC for assessment and advice. If NO: No further action required, except signing the declaration and the checklist, and submitting it to the DESC with supporting documentation.

DECLARATION BY RESEARCHER:
I hereby declare that I will conduct my research in compliance with the professional code(s) of ethics and guidelines for ethically responsible research relevant to my field of study as specified in the list herewith attached, AND the 'Framework policy for the assurance and promotion of ethically accountable research at the Namibia University of Science and Technology', even if my research poses minimal or low ethical risk.

Print name of Researcher: Liicka Andima	
	Signature of Researcher:
Date: 05.06.2018	05.06.2018
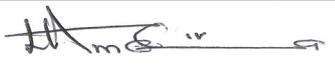
Print name of Supervisor (if applicable):	Signature of Supervisor
Date:	
Print name of co-supervisor(s) (if applicable):	
Date:	

Note: Faculty should provide staff members and students with a list of professional Code(s) of Ethics and Guidelines for ethically responsible research or refer them to appropriate online site where the information will be accessed.