

**Audience Perception of The Punch Newspaper Cartoons:
A study of Caritas University.**

BY

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Title Page

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A Project Presented To The Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike Emene ,Enugu State, in Partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Degree in Mass Communication.

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APPROVAL PAGE

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Dedication

This project work is graciously dedicated to the Almighty God for his love and Knowledge granted on me. Also, to my beloved parents Mr and Mrs Isaac Okere for their love and support throughout my academic pursuit in life.

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Abstract

Cartoons have more recently become a prominent feature in newspapers. An increasing number of publishers and editors have realised its relevance and are beginning to exploit its full potentials. Despite its usefulness and popularity which is assuming a viral dimension in many media houses, one wonders, as replete and common place as these cartoons are in newspapers, do they command the attention, let alone the readership of the reading audience? Hence, this researcher sought to know the pattern and trend of: Audience perception of The Punch newspaper cartoons: using Caritas University as a study. Employing the survey research method, enabled by administering self administered questionnaires, this study found out that newspaper readership and newspaper cartoon readership is generally high among Caritas respondents. Six out of every ten lecturers read cartoons on a daily basis, while two out of every ten students read cartoons every day. Cartoon readership decreased as student readers got older. Among the lecturers, readership of cartoons increased with age contrary to findings among students. With the humour and the inherent message being the major reasons why readers read cartoons, it is clear that cartoons are not seen as mere pieces of drawing to make readers laugh, rather it leaves a trail of telltale message in its wake. Even though this study revealed that cartoons are not essentially why people buy newspapers, many newspaper readers do not consider their reading experience complete without reading one or two cartoons. This, perhaps, explains why seven out of every twenty Caritas student reads The Punch newspaper and ten out of every twenty Caritas lecturer reads the same newspaper as revealed by the study. Going by the various findings of this study, more newspapers need to incorporate cartoons into their editorial menu, using it more strategically, appropriately and responsibly. Religion, ethnicity, tribalism, sectionalism and bigotry should be downplayed in cartoons and in fact avoided. The researcher equally lends his voice to the effect that cartoonists should steer clear of issues that can cause libel because libel costs millions.

Chapter One

Introduction

1:1 Background of the Study

Communication being a mandatory factor for interaction and correlation, stipulates the need to communicate with individuals in a contemporary civilization which is a basic requirement for survival, just as food, clothing, shelter e.t.c. are essential for human existence.

Communication, the most vital form of human interaction, is absolutely necessary for any enduring human relationship, be it interpersonal or international. Groups, institutions, organizations and nations exist by virtue of communication and cease to exist once communication is totally interfered with.

Communication therefore, is the livewire of any society and the world at large. It stipulates the paramount factor of unification due to the fact that a society that is kept incommunicado is a dead one. Indeed, communication is the fulcrum of social intercourse and the mirror through which society sees itself.

Cooley in Daramola (2003:1) asserts that “communication is the mechanism through which human relationship exist and develops”. It is through effective communication that every part of the society is accessed and social and institutional changes effected.

Communication is, undisputedly the carrier of social system. It shapes people and people shape it. Proper and effective communication provides useful information that enables people make informed decisions and well executed actions.

In compliance to dissemination of information and communicating effectively are journalists. Journalists who are professionals trained for the collection, processing, correlation and dissemination of information, are powerful gatekeepers and actors whose work sustain a society. The print media journalist through their news stories, editorials and opinions contained in newspapers and magazines, not only set the agenda for public discourse, but also reflect the environment.

Casmus in Abdulsalaam (1987:49) has said “a newspaper is a nations conscience”.

Akinfeleye (2003:18) observes that journalists are “public servants informing members of the public on issues of public interest”.

Essentially, they are the watchdogs who keep watch on the institutions of the society. They are, therefore expected to inform and educate the people and also create a forum which affords people the opportunity to examine and consider all sides there are to an issue.

Modern newspaper tends to carry many light and sensitive materials including articles written in a light mood. This feature fulfils the entertainment function of a newspaper. Among the light content is the cartoon.

According to Ahuja and Chhabra (2002:22-23), cartoons are one of the light materials used by newspaper houses to lighten the mood of their readers as they (cartoons) have become an integral and common feature of most newspapers, if not all. In the words of Ahuja and Chhabra, “even the most serious newspapers and magazines nowadays are expected to carry strip cartoons or topical comics here and there. It is one thing on which most of the newspapers seem to be agreed as it makes for the continued popularity of such newspaper..... and offers a welcome change from the cares, anxieties and worries of everyday life”.

Rivers et al (1977:20-21), said that as an “entertainment tool, cartoons provide respite for the individual which, perhaps encourages him to continuously indulge himself with such palliative media messages”. Regardless of the escape they provide from the supposed ‘dreary’ and ‘boredom’ of reading straight news, features, commentaries and opinions, they are also a rich source of humour, satire, innuendos and parody, often used to condemn, commend, and generally pass across salient and trivial messages.

In most cases, rather than real pictures, cartoons are used to illustrate stories, events, occurrences and happenings. They also lend some aesthetic value to the overall design of a newspaper or magazine. In fact, cartoonists are known to make a decent living from cartoon drawings, just as more print media houses are beginning to appreciate the value of cartoons and devoting more newspaper space to it.

According to the Longman’s Contemporary English Dictionary, cartoons are funny drawings in newspapers, often including humorous cartoons. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary describes a cartoon as an amusing drawing in a newspaper or magazine, especially one about politics or events in the news.

According to Obasi (2011:149), cartoon is a drawing or series of drawings that tells a story or expresses a message. It can be a type of drawing, usually intended to be amusing used in newspapers, magazines and books.

Pictures are said to be worth a thousand words according to a Chinese saying, and as cartoons happen to be funny pictorial representations of real events and/or characters, this saying also applies to them. This is so because pictures are able to depict more clearly things that have to be explained in so many words. Apart from newspapers, cartoons are also used in magazines, journals, books as well as television programmes where they are animated and made to seem as if they are moving.

Newspaper cartoons have, however been employed as a tool for editorializing i.e. passing across the organization’s view on pertinent public or national issues. They have been used to

accompany stories to illustrate what is written. Cartoons help sensitize people against social vices, thus facilitating positive human interaction, yet bearing in mind the entertainment function they are designed to serve.

Cartoons have proved to be very indispensable because while some individuals may not be literate enough to read and adequately understand the message contained in news stories, they are still able to have an understanding of cartoons and the recognition of the subject in such cartoons.

Boss Tweed, an American politician, unwittingly underscored the importance of cartoons when he was quoted in 'last laugh' (Campbel et al 2000:35), to have said back in 1871 "stop the damn pictures, I don't care for your newspaper articles, my constituents can't read them, but they can't help seeing them damn pictures", when cartoonist Thomas Nast published satirical cartoons about his political activities. It can be said with some measures of certainty that reading and understanding cartoons might not be a problem in an academic community such as Caritas University Amorji-Nike, Enugu among lecturers and students. Therefore, it becomes pertinent at this point to do a profiling on the object of study.

Caritas University

Caritas University is a private catholic university, the second of its kind in the West African Sub- Region, after Madonna University Okija. By the grace of God this is the second private university to be approved by the Federal Government of Nigeria and officially opened in 2005.

Caritas is the property of the Sisters of Jesus the Saviour, a religious congregation of sisters founded by Very Rev. Fr. Prof. Emmanuel M. P. Edeh Cssp.

Being a fast rising private catholic University, enrolment in the university has now grown to over 3,052 students presently in the University and a total academic staff of 206.

The University comprises of four faculties. The faculties offer a total of 27 programmes in Engineering, Natural Sciences, Environmental Sciences, and Management and Social Sciences.

Inspiration and Spirit of Foundation

Caritas University was brought into being by the admirable efforts of the afore-mentioned Very Rev. Fr. Prof. Emmanuel M.P. Edeh Cssp, of the Holy Ghost Congregation, Nigeria Province.

Greatly distressed at the miserable state of education and morals in Nigerian society especially in schools, Fr. Edeh prayed and sought any laudable means of doing something about it no matter how small. In this he sought to rescue some of our wandering teeming youth

population from further slide into academic and moral decay. This desire was to find its concrete realization in the establishment of many primary and secondary schools and four tertiary institutions, the Osisatech Polytechnic Enugu, Osisatech College of Education Enugu, Madonna University Okija, and finally, the present Caritas University at Amorji-Nike Emene, Enugu State.

In all these institutions Fr. Edeh sought to combine provisions of holistic education at affordable cost to the benefit of all both rich and poor, with sound moral formation or character building without which any form of education can be turned into a formidable instrument of destruction of the human person.

The University Motto

The University Motto is “Love for Education and Morals”. This dictum is not meant to be a mere paper proclamation of good intentions but a guiding philosophy of its entire University life. Its practical implications are to be built into the University academic, moral, spiritual, socio-economic and political life. Every aspect of life in the university must breathe this flavour.

The Ultimate Goal of Caritas University

To give efficacy to its motto and its philosophy of education, Caritas embraces not only sound education for professional skills and competencies in various fields but also maintains strict discipline. By discipline we mean the training of the mind, body, soul and spirit to obedience and self-control. The students must not only be intellectually and professionally prepared for different task and roles in the world, they must also be morally equipped to face the world itself with all its tensions, conflicts, challenges and contradictions. They must be prepared well for healthy competitions in the labour market and come out victorious. They must also be adequately prepared to face the attractions of evil in all its forms and come out winners.

Before undertaking an even more critical look at the roles cartoons play in a democratic society which will be undertaken in chapter two, it is necessary to examine the statement of the problem in focus.

1:2 Statement of the Problem

True, many newspapers are replete with burlesque representations in the form of cartoons which are used to pass across various messages, these cartoons to some people help lighten the mood from stress when going through these newspaper cartoons, giving them a sense of humour and freedom laughing through these caricatures.

Regardless of the readership of newspaper cartoons, specifically in Caritas University which triggers a sense of reasoning as to what truly motivates the readership of newspaper cartoons among lecturers and students of Caritas University; probably the readership of newspaper cartoons by lecturers and students help motivate the buying of newspapers. Also, educational advancement on the part of lecturers and students might aid a better understanding of

newspaper cartoons and probably the effects of gender on newspaper cartoon readership understanding, also pertaining to the social classification of individuals this research tends to find out if demographic factors have an effects on the understanding of newspaper cartoons on lecturers and students of Caritas University.

These problems and many more are what this research work tends to find out in the course of research, using Caritas University as population.

Also, cartoons tend to be perceived by many newspaper readers from an entertainment-laden perspective, sometimes considered by intellectuals to be for the simple minded and less intelligent, but ‘inappropriate’ for more serious minded people. Williams Stephenson lends credence to this claim in his ‘Play Theory’ of mass communication when he posited that many people use media messages more for pleasure and relaxation than for information and improvement.

Hence, Aina (2003) states that “it is not surprising that some people view only musicals and drama on television, while also concentrating on fashion and comics in newspapers and magazines”. This study therefore, sought to find out what other values people sought from reading cartoons other than the entertainment value and if lecturers and students considers cartoons to be for the simple minded? In all, this research work studied the psycho-sociological attributes affecting readership patterns of newspaper cartoons; how individual differences and social categories affected the readership patterns of newspaper cartoons.

1:3 Objective of the Study

1. To find out whether newspaper cartoons are read, by lecturers and students of Caritas University.
2. To find out what other value outside humour that newspaper cartoons provide.
3. To assess how demographic factors affect cartoon readership.
4. To find out whether cartoon messages are understood.

1:4 Research Questions

In order to achieve the specific objectives of this study, the following questions guided this study:

1. To what extent do Caritas University lecturers and students read the Punch newspaper cartoons?
2. What other values do newspaper cartoons give readers outside humour?
3. To what extent is reading of cartoons one of reader’s motivations for buying newspapers?
4. To what extent do readers of cartoons understand the messages?
5. To what extent do demographic factors such as age and sex have any sort of influence on newspaper cartoon readership?

1:5 Hypotheses

H₁: Demographical factors influence the readership patterns of the Punch newspaper cartoons.

H₂: The Punch newspaper cartoons are motivational factors for the buying of newspapers in Caritas University.

1:6 Scope of the Study

For the purpose of adopting this research work into context, Caritas University lecturers and students were chosen as the case in study, using sampling methods of two types namely, cluster sampling and simple random sampling. Caritas University which is made up of four (4) faculties and twenty-seven (27) departments, out of which two (2) faculties were randomly selected and ten (10) departments from each of the two faculties were also randomly selected which summed up to twenty (20) departments. Consequently, thirty (30) students from each of the ten (10) departments were randomly selected which made three hundred (300) students.

Also, six (6) lecturers from each of the ten (10) departments were randomly selected which made a total of sixty (60) lecturers. Thus, a total of three hundred and sixty (360) respondents were approximately questioned in total.

1:7 Significance of the Study

This study attempted to analyze the readership of newspaper cartoons among lecturers and students using Caritas University as the population with a view to providing insight, making it a valuable document especially for media practitioners, advertisers, other stake holders and researchers.

This study also examined the relevance of cartoons in newspapers viz-a-viz its readership by respondents, highlighting the trends and patterns in its readership pattern from a Caritas University perspective. Therefore, the significance of this study lies in the scholarship it offers, going a long way in extending the frontiers of knowledge in mass communication research.

1:8 Definitions of Terms

Operational definition

The following terms have been defined to aid the comprehension of this study.

NEWSPAPER: This is an unbounded publication that is published on a regular basis containing a variety of reading matters and if often supplemented with pictures.

CARTOONS: An amusing drawing in a newspaper or magazine about events or happenings in the news.

CARTOONIST: A person who draws cartoons.

READERS: Caritas University lecturers and students who read newspaper cartoons.

READERSHIP: The number and demographic attributes of Caritas University lecturers and students who read newspaper cartoons.

MESSAGE: The important moral, social, cultural or political idea that a cartoon is trying to communicate or portray.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This study attempts to analyze the readership of newspaper cartoons in Caritas University by lecturers and students. Therefore, the review will take a critical look at previous studies, write-ups and relevant topics and concepts pertinent to this study, as well as the theoretical framework on which this work is premised.

2:1 Sources of Literature

The data used in this study are sourced from primary and secondary data. The secondary data are already prepared research work of scholars on related topics from relevant books, journals, magazines, newspapers, published and unpublished materials.

2:2 Review of Relevant Literature

Conceptual Review

The following concepts will be reviewed

Cartoons (definition, origin and development, types and significance)

Caricature

Comic Strips

Illustration

Cartoon Types

Cartooning in Nigeria

Roles cartoons play in a democratic society

Significance of the press

The watchdog press

Newspapers and the reading public

CARTOONS

The word “cartoon” according to blogs as searched from the internet via: (<http://www.answers.com/topic/thehistoryofthecartoon>), is often used as an umbrella term for a number of art forms consisting of drawings with or without words. Coming under this broad generalization are caricatures, cartoons, comic strips and animations. While the first three come under the print media, the last refers to drawing made lively through electronic process and, hence, possibly only in the television and film media

Before the introduction of the term “cartoon” in its modern sense in the 19th century, satirical and humorous drawings of all kinds were referred to as caricatures. Today “caricature” is used mostly to refer to distorted portraiture that emphasizes the characteristic traits of an individual; it may either stand on its own or form part of a cartoon. Beyond these central forms, the term “cartoon” has also been applied to comics, television and film animation, multi-frame jokes published in newspapers, continuity strips, graphic novels, humorous advertising, humorous book and magazine illustrations, and satirical puppetry.

According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica:

Caricature, cartoon and comic strips are related forms. Historically, they arose in the order given, but all have flourished together. All use the same artistic medium of drawing, printmaking, caricature and the element of satire are usually present in each.

Cartoons are said to be slightly distinct from caricature and comics strips in that they are drawings with or without captions which makes a point in an amusing, satirical or humorous way. Usually, their targets are political and public affairs but they focus on other subjects.

Various definitions have been proffered for the term cartoons. According to *Webster’s Universal Dictionary and Thesaurus*, a cartoon is a humorous picture dealing with current reproduction on a *fresco* painting with exaggerations or distortion of characteristic features. A *fresco* is a picture that is painted on a wall while the plaster is still wet. A comic strip, it also says, is a series of drawing that depicts a story in stages.

According to *Concise Oxford English Dictionary Thumb Index Edition*, a cartoon is a drawing executed in an exaggerated style for humorous or satirical effect.

Danny De Laet (1979: 76) defines a cartoon as a “forceful idea quickly expressed in a few strokes of the pen, explosive enough to catch the eye, but sufficiently stylized and disguised in such a way that the target figures should not recognize themselves, or if they did, would be unable to prosecute the cartoonist for having depicted them with too much realism”. A cartoon is, therefore, the modernized, economical, straightforward and more direct version of the old lampoon or humorous drawing that was used during the 19th century.

According to Jegede (1999: 183), “The cartoon may be described as a conundrum, a graphic phantom that does not always signify what it implies, a medium that at once affirms and denies. It possesses pictorial qualities that facilitate the codification of messages in succinct, subtle or hidden form”. Generally, one might say that cartoon refers to any drawing which through the use of humour, satire or caricature provokes a response in an audience.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica defines cartoon as a “pictorial parody; a multiplied reproduced analogy and ludicrous juxtaposition, frequently highlighted by written dialogues or commentary which sharpens the public view of a contemporary event, folkway or political or social trend”.

Cartoon (humorous drawing), pictorial sketch or caricature, by implication humorous or satirical, are usually published in a newspaper, magazine or periodical. In spite of the slight difference, cartoon seems to be inseparable from caricature. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the concept of caricature.

CARICATURE

Still according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, “the caricature is a distorted presentation of a person, character or action”. A common salient feature or characteristic of the subject is seized upon and exaggerated, or features of animals or plants are substituted for human parts, or analogy is made to animal actions. Usually, a caricature is a line drawing which is published for the amusement of people to whom the real, original character is known.

COMIC STRIP

The comic strip is made up of a series of adjacent drawn images usually arranged horizontally that are designed to be read as a narrative or in chronological sequence. Words may be introduced near each sequence or dispensed with altogether. When, however, words are made to dominate the image, it becomes merely an illustration to a text.

ILLUSTRATION

According to Jegede (2002: 26), an illustration is defined as a drawing which is used to illustrate text. And illustrations have been used successfully by the print media to draw attention to stories or features, or to complement an article. Aliu Eroje, Chief Cartoonist, The Punch Newspaper, adds that cartoon illustrations or illustrative cartoons may include cartoons that are drawn with a storyline such as Femora's 'Funky Husband' which is a regular feature in the Punch Newspaper.

CARTOONS: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

What may be seen as possibly the earliest political cartoon is an anonymous woodcut entitled *Le Revers du Jeu des Suyses* (The Other Side of the Swiss Game), produced in 1499. In this, the pope, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the kings of France and England can be seen playing cards while, under the table, a Swiss soldier stacks the decks in a satirical commentary on French ambitions in Italy (the support of elite Swiss soldiers was essential to France). At about the same time, Pope Alexander VI was depicted as a devil, and in another drawing, a Jesuit priest is given a wolf's head. Perhaps the most memorable caricature of this period—and one exactly datable and attributable to a known artist—was an anti-Protestant woodcut by Erhard Schoen of 1521, showing the Devil playing a pair of bagpipes, the bellows of which are depicted as the head of Martin Luther.

A number of other artists of this period also produced heavily allegorical and often fantastic drawings which have resonances in the modern cartoon. However, it was in Italy at the hands of the Carracci family and others such as Pier Leone Ghezzi—the first artist to earn a living solely by this kind of work—that the modern cartoon can be said to have been modeled. It was also in Italy that these early caricatures flourished, and almost uniquely so until collections

of such drawings (especially those of Ghezzi) found their way across Europe, and Hogarth began his sequence of “modern moral subjects” in England in the 1730s. (<http://www.answers.com/topic/thehistoryofthecartoon>)

I. The 18th Century

Lord Byron is reputed to have said: “Ridicule is the only weapon the English climate cannot trust.” In the field of cartoons and caricature, it could be argued with some justification that the English—or more properly the British—have often wielded the sharpest weapons of all. The first British artist to excel in this area—for many, the true founder of the modern cartoon in all its aspects, whether socio-political satire, caricature, or simple graphic humor—was William Hogarth. He was also the first artist to mass-produce his own work, in the form of engravings, for sale to the public. His satires on the follies and vices of his age were a great success and set the tone for all future work.

II. The Early 19th Century

Hogarth’s successors, Thomas Rowlandson and James Gillray were primarily social satirists and made numerous prints that commented on the manners and fashions of the day, or that depicted bawdy scenes. However, Rowlandson is probably best known for his creation of what is perhaps the first cartoon character, Dr Syntax, in *The Three Tours of Dr Syntax* (1809, 1820, and 1821). Though Rowlandson did in fact produce many fine political drawings (especially of Napoleon), it was James Gillray, with the support of the leading West End print-seller Mrs Hannah Humphrey, who dominated the political field in this period

III. The Late 19th Century

The second half of the 19th century saw a flowering of first-class talent in cartoons and caricatures.

IV. The Early 20th Century

The invention of photography at the end of the 19th century and, from it, the development of process printing gave still more flexibility to the humorous artist. Also noticeable was a loosening up of style. Long explanatory captions became progressively shorter and the drawings themselves—especially those of Phil May and others—became more dynamic and far less labored. (<http://www.answers.com/topic/thehistoryofthecartoon>)

V. Impact of World War II on cartoons

World War II gave rise to an enormous expansion of cartoon talent. On the one hand, both sides in the conflict realized the power of the pictorial image to convey a powerful message both to the barely literate and to those who spoke a different language—and thus used cartoons and caricature as part of a wider propaganda campaign that also included cinema newsreels, posters, aerial leafleting, and so forth. On the other hand, people needed relief from the deprivations of war, and cartoons, as much as music halls, concert parties, humorous films, radio comedies, and other light-hearted entertainments, were much in demand.

One of the most influential artists on the side of the Allies—and arguably the most potent force in political cartoon and caricature worldwide—was the New Zealander David Low, who worked in Britain for the London Evening Standard during the conflict. Among his poignant drawings were “Rendezvous”, attacking the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939: Hitler bows to Stalin over a dead soldier while remarking to his former enemy “The scum of the earth, I believe”, in reply to which Stalin doffs his cap with the words “The bloody assassin of the workers, I presume”. The epithet “Heath Robinson” has become a term for any absurdly and impracticably ingenious contrivance, with Low responsible for introducing the word “blimp” into the English language: deriving from his popular creation, Colonel Blimp, an overweight, bald-headed, reactionary old diehard with a drooping moustache, famed for the bizarre logic of his comments on world affairs usually delivered from the steam-room of a Turkish bath while wrapped in a bath-towel. (<http://www.uky.edu/drlance/capstone/mass/agenda.htm>)

VI. Cartoons in Africa

The history of cartoons in Africa is younger because of the inability to preserve cartoon works. But the art of sculpture is thought to date back 600 years. It is believed that the great western artist Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) was greatly influenced by African sculpture, believing it to be free of the constraints of naturalism or realism. But the Bushman rock art of South Africa and Namibia, the Nok culture of Northern Nigeria, the sculptural works of Ife (AD1160-1600), the Benin kingdom works (1,500-1700), bronzes and terra cotta art forms showcased the symbolism, expressionism, impressionism and beauty in the African art. Cartoons were prevalent but not like in other civilizations.

VII. The Contemporary Scene

Today there is a growing tradition in Europe of captionless drawings, often with a strong political message. Other cartoons, however, such as those of Steve Bell in Britain, whose attacks on the premiership of Margaret Thatcher were described in the House of Lords in 1987 as “an almost obscene series of caricatures”, seem to be reviving the tradition of malicious lampoonery that dates back to the times of James Gillray. On the caricature side, whether one looks at the work of David Levine in the United States, Mulatier-Ricord-Morchoisne in France, or that of countless others, it seems that cartoon art is becoming ever more influenced by photography, combined with the sort of extra-fine draughtsmanship that was practiced by such artists as Tenniel in the 19th century.

But in more contemporary times, cartoons have become very prominent. In most Nigerian newspapers cartoons have become regular features. So much so that, most newspapers devote as much as two pages to cartoons at weekends and have become daily features.

In the days of consummate despots like Idi Amin Dada, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, Sanni Abacha, Gnassingbe Eyadema, Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler, cartoonists hid their critical comments inside the characters of their cartoon expressions. Their works were subjected to convoluted and chameleonic interpretations. Indeed, cartoons grew from then to become the most formidable means of expression and the most veritable weapons in the armory of critics.

They are indeed, cryptogramized hieroglyphics for furtively putting out criticisms across to the public. (<http://allafrica.com/stories/200602200094.html>)

Nevertheless, whatever new path the satirical artists of the future take, and however controversial it is, their vision of society, politics, and daily life will continue to play an important role in contemporary culture.

For as Michael Foot, former leader of the British Labor Party has said: “Nothing to touch the glory of the great cartoonists! They catch the spirit of the age and then leave their own imprint on it; they create political heroes and villains in their own image; they simply teach the historians their trade.”

Origin and Development of Cartoons: The Nigerian Angle

Even though, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, cartoon acquired its meaning in 1843 (originally, a cartoon was and still is a full sized pattern for execution in painting, the final stages in the series of drawn preparations for painting in traditional renaissance studio practice), Jegede (2002:26), says that the use of cartoons dates back to the fifteenth century when it was used as an essential element in the completion of designs as well as *frescoes* which is a form of wall painting practised by Italians like Leonardo Da Vinci (1452 – 1519) and Michelangelo (1475 – 1563).

Closely related to cartoons are caricatures, which Jegede says is a description of a person or thing that makes them seem ridiculous by exaggerating some of their characteristics. The word itself is derived from an Italian verb “*caricare*” which means to load or surcharge.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica notes that caricature after its spread as an idea and practice from Italy and France to Great Britain in the 18th century became a rather broad term. Therefore, it is not surprising that cartoons as they are now known developed gradually out of caricatures from the 15th century. Cartoon is said to be a 19th century word.

According to Onu (1987: 3), caricatures as a satirical presentation of persons and action began in the renaissance period with artists such as Agostinos Carracci (1557 – 1602) and Giovanni Bernini (1597 – 1680).

Onu (1987: 3) explains further that the third kind of art formed under the generalization of cartoons is comic strips. He states that a comic strip is a pictorial anecdote of serial story based on contemporary history. The comic strip, he says, came about as a result of the editorial cartoon during the last year of the 19th century and “it combines the skills of the cartoonist, caricaturist, the raconteur and the dramatist in giving its message. In passing information, it usually does not use known persons as in caricature but occasionally, a real person is often featured among its characters”.

The success of any comic, especially that running from the publication of another depends a lot on daily or weekly newspapers as well as syndication. Through syndication, the strip is presented at the same time in different newspapers which are in contract with the syndicate. Acting on behalf of the artist, the syndicate receives the cartoonist’s strip in advance of the date of publication, produces them photo mechanically, and then, passes them to newspapers or magazines in their subscription. Onu (1987: 4)

From the analysis, it follows that cartoons, caricatures and comic strips are, somewhat, inextricably intertwined. This seeming relationship is as a result of the fact that like a caricaturist, the cartoonist can also develop the exaggeration that is associated with caricatures in making his point. Also, both caricatures and cartoons by their nature provide the readers greater understanding of the essence of person, type and action. The comic strip, however, remains a variation of the cartoon.

Types of Cartoons

In recent years, cartoon has mostly been used to describe three specific kinds of drawing. These are the political or editorial cartoon - the main daily or weekly pictorial comment in a newspaper or magazine, referring to a current political or social issue; the pocket cartoon - a single-column drawing on a topical subject, often on the front page of a newspaper; and the

single-joke or gag cartoon, which relies for its effect on amusing social commentary or wordplay. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wikicartoons_types).

According to Aliu Eroje, Chief Cartoonist, The Punch Newspaper, cartoons are divided into distinct categories each with identifiable characteristics. There is the cartoon illustration, the editorial cartoon, the strip cartoon and the single panel cartoon which Eroje refers to as pocket cartoon. Jegede in the Post Express of Feb. 21 2002: 26 states that the cartoon illustration's principal feature is the drawing which is used to illustrate the text. Cartoon illustration has been used successfully in the print media to draw attention to stories and features or to complement an article. He further explains that "the single panel cartoon or pocket cartoon contains all activities, drawing or text within one panel. This kind may ascribe statements to the characters or carry captions with situations depicted.

Some means often employed by cartoonists doing single panel pieces include labeling and symbolization". In labeling, the character wears a tag, for example, "police man", "NLC", "Federal Government" e.t.c, while in symbolization; familiar symbols are creatively employed in a manner that those within the cultural milieu will understand. For example, a figure wearing a dark shade is generally understood to represent the late General, Sanni Abacha. Eroje describes pocket cartoon as "usually small, single panel cartoons on the front or back pages of newspapers, e.g. Omooba in The Punch and Mr. & Mrs. in Vanguard, usually used to address political and social issues".

The strip cartoon is also referred to as the comic strip, and it explores a series of panels, often in a narrative sequence which may be concluded with each publication or may form a coherent whole of an unfolding plot in subsequent editions. This is corroborated by Emmanuel Didi Onu, Cartoonist, The Guardian who affirmed that "the comic cartoons are also called strips with the difference being that a comic is a continuous story run on a daily basis and it requires the reader to follow the story line through a number of subsequent publications to get to the end of the story". He adds that "the strip cartoons are to entertain, though they may pass across some messages as can be found in Punch, Vanguard or Saturday Guardian. They have fixed characters, for example, Captain Africa". Onu would later describe caricatures as "editorial or political

drawings that makes use of distortion of people's faces and figures such as a big head on a small body.”

Jegede (Feb. 21, 2002: 26) asserts that “Action in the strip cartoon starts with the first frame and ends with the last, either conclusively or with suspense when further development of ongoing activities is envisaged. Since Cliff Oguigo started the maiden edition of ‘Title Joe’ in Sunday Times of June 15, 1969, the strip cartoon genre has been popularized in Nigerian newspapers and they can range from humorous, serious to high heated”. Eroje says of strips that they are “usually for entertainment and could be a storyline”.

Jegede also makes mention of the editorial cartoon which he says is a recent type of cartoon contained in a single panel. Here, the cartoon is used to mirror or support the opinion espoused by the newspaper management on any issue of public discourse. The editorial cartoon, therefore, can simply be seen as a visual representation of what is contained in the newspaper editorial. An editorial cartoon is an editorial in pictorial form. Like the editorial writer, the cartoonist expresses his opinion with the editorial cartoon, but instead of doing this through the use of words, the cartoonist expresses his ideas and convictions through the art of drawing. Eroje adds that editorial cartoons often “look at government policies as it affects the government and the masses; and other such issues as corruption and other vices. According to Didi Onu, “The editorial cartoon, as the name implies reflects the polity and the editorial issues in the media. Most times, they appear in the editorial page and can be conversational in nature or contained in a single panel. It basically informs”.

It would be apt at this point to examine the significance of cartoons in a democratic dispensation, but not without first looking at the significance of the press.

Significance of the Press

It is a basic assumption that the press is of considerable, and still growing importance, and the reasons seem to lie in the fact that the press is:

- 1:** a power resource – a potential means of influence, control and innovation;

2: the primary means of transmission and source of information essential to the working of most social institutions; the location (or arena) where many affairs of public life are played out both nationally and internationally;

3: a major source of definition and images of social reality; thus also the place where the changing culture and the values of societies and groups are constructed, stored and most visibly expressed;

4: the primary key to fame and celebrity status as well as to effective performance in the public arena;

5: the source of an ordered and structured system which provides a benchmark for what is normal, empirical and evaluative; deviations are signaled and comparisons made in terms of public version of normality and decency.

As it is, the most fundamental questions of society – those concerning the distribution and exercise of power, the management of problems and the processes of integration and change – all have a lot to do with the media; especially the messages carried by the public means of communication, whether in the form of information, opinion, stories or cartoons.

Constitutional Obligation of the Press

A constitution may be defined as the whole body of fundamental laws, customs, conventions, principles, rules and regulations according to which a particular government of a country or organization operates. The constitution, therefore, specifies the workings of a government or organization, the functions of its officials, the rights and duties of its citizens or members, the fundamental political principles, structures, procedures, powers and duty of the government. Anyaele (2000: 99).

Section 22 of the 1999 constitution clearly spells out the obligation of the mass media. It states that;

*The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass
shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives*

contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people.

The onus is, therefore, on the press to uphold its watchdog role by ensuring that elected representatives are made accountable for their stewardship. This constitutes the hallowed constitutional obligation of the press to the people.

The Watchdog Press

This posture implies that the press serves as the bulwark of the citizens against oppression of the voiceless majority by the powerful minority, blatant abuse of power, failure of leadership and institutions and the mindless exploitation of the underprivileged by the privileged. Specifically, the mass media, and particularly the print media have a clear and unshrinkable duty to criticize and appraise the occurrence and events of the moment.

The watchdog role of the press to the public is like that of a dog that is kept to guard a house and give warning upon the approach of intruders or invaders. The role of the press in this direction is to watch over the people's interests and to bark, and where possible bite, if and when public interest is threatened. The press is the crusader for social justice, public morality, civil liberties and human progress.

While the media have historically been viewed as been overly aggressive and insatiable in their thirst for the latest and hottest news, their watchdog-type role is essential in a democratic society where people must know what their government is doing. The media, by virtue of section 22 of the 1999 constitution have the capacity to hold the government accountable to the people, forcing it to explain its actions and decisions, all of which affect the people they represent. In a democratic society, people should know all options available to them, and the media are a vehicle for the dissemination of such information. It does not only reflect public opinion, but also guides and leads it.

It should be known that information is power and power is abused with information. Knowledge is also power and any person who means to participate meaningfully and actively in any community must arm himself with the power that knowledge gives. This researcher doubts if

it is possible for any ignorant citizen to contribute meaningfully to any national development programme.

Due to the might of the pen, the journalist has always been perceived as very powerful, possessing all the 'weapons' that can build or destroy a government. It is in this line of thought that former president Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia told delegates at the International Press Institute (IPI) meeting in Kenya in June 1994 that "The press is capable of making government, given appropriate condition, it can cause war or create conditions for peace, it can promote development or create difficulties in development". This, therefore, dovetails into the issue of constituted authority perceiving the press as a foe and a stumbling block instead of an ally and a partner in progress.

Newspaper Cartoons and the Reading Public

Reading helps to sharpen our vision and our memory. A beautiful piece of writing, they say, is an inspiration, a lifelong friend and something very special. Reading involves sharing in the world of others; any one that aspires to be a leader must be a reader.

Hence, the extension of newspaper reach to the 'masses', beyond the circle of an educated elite or business class which is a familiar picture of press history, is very laudable, although the reasons are disputed. Improved technology, rising literacy level, commerce, democracy and popular demand all played a part, and they largely coincided with their timing.

According to Keane (1991), there has been a significant rise in the popularity of newspapers. In assessing the upward spiral in the popularity of newspapers, a growing market penetration of the commercial press (as a vehicle for advertising and entertainment) and the reading of the newspaper for mainly political purposes are noticeable.

However, the Chairman of Literamed Publications Nigeria Limited, Otunba Yinka Lawal Solarin believes otherwise, particularly with regard to the Nigerian situation. In his opinion, "the absence of a developed reading culture is one of the most visible obstacles to national development..., Nigerians reading culture is at its lowest ebb, thus, negatively affecting the society".

Otunba Solarin concedes that “reading newspapers and reading in general is contagious, creates lots of fun and gives special enjoyment that nothing else can replace”, adding that newspapers and books help in developing children's vocabulary and ultimately their communication skills. He even makes a more poignant point. He says “research conducted by a group of experts shows that Nigerian youths preferred to watch cartoons at all times to reading books”, stressing that the research necessitated the introduction of 'The Comic Hut' in order to engage the children in reading and creating amiable interest in books, even if they are books on cartoon characters.

It has been noted that Nigeria has the commercial space where solely cartoon magazines can flourish. Nigerians lose their reading habits after graduating from university, seeing the certificate, as an end in itself. But when cartoons are incisive and didactic, they rekindle the art of reading. Cartoons, clearly, have the potentials to invite Nigerians back to their books.

Solarin stresses further the need for educative, colorful and very entertaining cartoons both in newspapers and books to boost the reading culture of the Nigerian child in order to make reading less of a boring activity. While school gets everyone to read, it is not able to spread the desire to read, rather it is the opposite - imposing a feeling of obligation.

Research studies, according to Akinfeleye (2008: 127), reveal that our ability to remember anything is aided by the kind of medium through which the message had been sent. This does not wholeheartedly support Marshall McLuhan's theory of “the medium is the message”. Akinfeleye points to the fact that research studies have revealed that we as human beings are able to remember:

30% of what we read (i.e. newspapers, magazines e.t.c)

40% of what we hear (i.e. radio)

50% of what we see and read (i.e. graphics, photos)

This means that the ability to remember articles and news stories read in newspapers is further boosted by the humour and satire cartoons used to illustrate such stories provide. A well contrived cartoon, be it plain humour or a satirical comment on a socio-economic or political

situation has a way of resonating with readers and leaving in its wake, a trail of thought provoking message imbued with sober reflection and introspection. The enhanced role of the newspaper in the political landscape of the country and at times of national crisis is remarkable and a striking feature of press history.

Cartoons and Newspaper Sales

Cartooning, according to some cartoonists, has generated a whole lot of readership interest in newspaper which has directly impacted on sales. According to Cheche Egbunne of The Punch Newspaper in Babalola (2007:41), cartoons help boost the sales of newspapers. In his words, “The ability of cartoons to draw readers and increase sales has been maximized at the Punch. The Punch cartoons are a constant in every edition”.

Eroje in Ayodeji (2008:18) confirms this revealing that “Punch exploits cartoons as a reader magnet to boost sales. Every year, we do a survey at the Punch about what items our readers like best, and it was found out that readers like our cartoons the most, followed by sports. For five years running, the cartoon department contributed the most to sales and about 60% of readers bought The Punch because of our cartoons”. Eroje notes that there has been a slight change. “For the last few years, however, interest has shifted to sports, but the cartooning department still always remains the first or second department when it comes to contribution to sales”. The Guardian’s Obe Ess also laid credence to the view that cartoons have boosted newspaper sales. “After buying a paper, some people read the cartoons first to unwind before doing the serious editorial and news story reading. Cartoons help boost sales and we even get letters and comments from readers about our cartoons”. Didi Onu, also of The Guardian in Jegede (2008: 185) confirms this when he said “Yes cartoons contribute to sales. Studies abound concerning readership and it has been discovered that cartoon pages are usually the pages most people first turn to in newspapers”.

Significance of Cartoons and Their Roles in a Democratic Society

Although, some people may think that cartoons are solely for entertainment purposes, but their influence are very potent and far reaching. Cartoons have been variously depicted by cartoonists, their audiences as well as students of the genre. According to Jegede (1999: 182), cartoons may be described as “a graphic phantom that does not always signify what it implies, a

medium that at once affirms and denies, it possesses pictorial quality that facilitates the codification of messages in a succinct, subtle or hidden form, in a multi-dimensional medium capable of cajoling, ridiculing, mesmerizing or castigating”.

Jegede again, in the Post Express (Feb. 21, 2002:26), stated that while “some politicians see it (cartoons) as a deadly weapon, the manufacture and use of which are exclusive to cartoonists, others see it as a necessary instrument for sanitizing the socio-political system”. Harrison (2000:31) gives it an elastic definition. He sees a cartoonist as “an educator and an editorialist, a seller and a seducer. He says cartoon can be seen as a purveyor of culture or a perverter of culture; as an art or literature, or both, or neither. Cartoon can educate or irritate, tickle or tease, inform or reform”.

Dong Marlette, one of America’s foremost cartoonists, was cited by Jegede in The Post Express to have stated that “cartoons are a vehicle of attack – the best ones possess a certain fury... the trick is to channel the rage in a constructive way”. According to Obe Ess in Ayodeji (2008: 42), individual foibles and institutional lapses are exposed through disguise, using satire, dramatization, exaggeration and pun. The intended message can, however, be perceived by a discerning reader.

Cartoonists are endowed with the ability to harm or disarm with humour and possess the skill to present their ideas so graphically that the drawing induces humour even before the captions are read. As Jegede (Feb. 21, 2002:26) puts it “cartoonists inflict on their victims a pang of anguish and fury; and upon their admirers a torrent of laughter”. In other words, apart from the important political, economic, social and cultural functions they perform, they also provoke introspective and retrospective thoughts, self analysis and reflective humour. They set readers thinking and laughing at the same time by seeing the funny side of serious issues. According to blogger and political cartoonist for Business Day, Nigeria, Etim Bassey Asukwo, in his blog, <http://asukwo.blogspot.com>, “Cartoons have a unique ability to capture the emotions and frustrations of the populace in a way that is both caustic and amusing — using a medium in caricature and text that is humorous and self deprecating, but ultimately illuminating”. Quoting Nnimo Bassey from the Guardian (Nov. 11 1984: 7), “Cartoonists are holders of the comic of relaxation. They feed us with satire of our auguries... Cartoons provide life in a condensed, concentrated form”.

In countries with authoritarian regimes, cartoons often serve as a voice for the masses, calling attention to ills that might be too incendiary to spell out explicitly in words. Ayodeji Babalola (2007:41) quotes Eroje as saying that “a cartoonist sees things differently from an ordinary reporter... The cartoonist uses expressions that cannot be said in ordinary words”. Cheche Egbunne of *The Punch* in Babalola (2007:41) stated that “A cartoonist can disguise news or controversial ideas perfectly, depending on his level of creativity”. Obe Ess of *The Guardian* is convinced that “in sensitive situations like state secrecy, cartoonists do not say it straight and often resort to innuendos and oblique hints that only people who think deep will understand”. For instance, in Nigeria, during the dark days of the military rulership of Ibrahim Babaginda and Sanni Abacha, when the press severally came into face to face brushes with the khaki boys, satirical cartoons critical of the excesses of the military boys became a ‘covert’ and ‘subtle’, yet equally pungent and potent weapon of incitement as against the easily noticeable and inflammatory news stories and editorials. The press, through the use of various tactics, including guerilla journalism and aggressive cartooning, revolted against the increasingly venal and arbitrary military rule, and fought and forced them to “stepping aside”. Onu in Babalola (2007:42) corroborates this saying that “Cartoonists, during the military era, did some of their finest and most creative cartoons”

Suffice to say that cartooning, through the deft use of humour and satire, has been at the vanguard of political change. Asukwo, E.B. in his blog: <http://asukwo.blogspot.com> captures it more succinctly, “Cartooning helps in bringing about a change; it gets people thinking enough to react”. Onu observes that “...with cartoons, you can insult someone or tell someone that he is stupid in clever ways. It is even possible for the target of the cartoon to find it funny before he realizes that it is referring to him. By then the message would have been passed across”.

Cartoons over the years have often been a source of great readership. The audience is both diverse and large, ranging from kids to adult as well as people from various backgrounds and both sexes. Because cartoons use both words and art, it is able to appeal to both the illiterate and the literate.

“The cartoonist must be a master of wit, a philosopher and a close student of mankind. Unlike the writer who does with just words, the cartoonist is faced with two problems, that of the visual and words – each posing its own challenge of semantic noise”. Onu (1997: 06).

The cartoons perform the function of education, interpretation and transmission of socio-cultural heritage and entertainment among others. In performing the function of education, political cartoons inform people of the action of government and in doing this they make excoriating comments. Government, conscious of the power of the cartoons often try to apply censorship and where this does not work, they solicit for the friendship of the cartoonist.

Cartoons, especially comic strips, through the dual function of entertainment and transmission of culture can provide a weapon for the re-education and re-orientation of the society, particularly children and even adults with impressionable minds. Cartooning can be a talent, and cartoonists, in moments of inspiration, create characters to act a behavioral model for readers, and because comics essentially entertain, such messages are easily fed into children's psyche.

A regular feature of most newspapers today is editorial cartoons and these developed in line with the functions of education and interpretation. Educational cartoons go to reinforce the editorials and re-echo the newspapers voice for social and political change. The cartoon tells more stories than can be contained in a thousand newspaper editorials by narrowing down the views and opinions of persons into a caption of not more than a line or two. Indeed, because its residual power is visual, a good cartoon expresses in few succinct words what a writer says in hundreds of words.

Through political and editorial cartoons, the cartoonist can adequately provide behind-the-scene information about the society which would otherwise have been impossible, or at best, cumbersome for the writer. Because cartoons give the advantage of both words and pictures, a cartoonist can comment shrewdly on anything. According to Onu (1987: 12), Walk Kelly, a renowned cartoonist, said that: "writers don't consider cartoonists as writers because they don't only write but draw. Artists don't consider cartoonists artists because they do not only draw but also write. Even without caption, cartoons send across biting messages – messages that can bite like a snake and sting like a bee". Onu says further that not only do cartoons inform people about occurrences; it also informs the government and its agencies about the reactions of the populace to issues and policies. An example of this is the *Omoba* cartoon by Aliu Eroje which read:

NEWS! Fuel Price Hike: No going back - PPPRA insists. To which *Omoba* replied: “PPPRA...PPRA...PRATTLING”

This cartoon uses pun and alliteration for the purpose of humor. It also passes across a message to the government that the price of fuel must be brought down and that PPPRA’S insistence on the hike was just nonsense, in essence, prattling.

Steve Iweanya in *Sunday Times* (May 13, 1985: 12) said “what the newspaper could say openly in their editorial and feature commentaries, cartoonists can tell it in cartoon displays, in witticism, and sarcasm, in comic strips and caricatures, satires and conundrums”. As Pat Olyphant, American cartoonist quoted by Nnimo Bassey in *The Guardian* (Nov. 11, 1994: 7) puts it “Cartooning has always been an anti-establishment activity. When you get down to it, cartoonists are essentially disrespectful towards authority and people who hold power”.

But the cartoonist function isn’t all criticism. As part of his surveillance and correlation function, the cartoonist helps put events in proper perspective, thereby guiding public opinion. Nwangwu in *The Guardian* (Nov. 11, 1984: 6) added that “the cartoonist duty must follow the tide of history, interpreting and reflecting reality to the benefit of his country, and also mirror the pains, the deprivations, the tribulations, the pulls and the demand of the system that pervades what we do, think and say”.

Aside from helping to direct the traffic of public opinion and crusading for specific goals, cartoons serve the cartoonist the special, self-fulfilling purpose of making it possible for him to express his own views, feelings and sentiments on any issue. Didi Onu re-echoed this when he said “The opinion in the cartoon is that of the cartoonist while the editorial is the opinion of the management”. For Boye Gbenro who was quoted by Mike Awoyinfa in the defunct *Sunday Concord* (April 3, 1985:35), “Cartooning is like the language of a jester. A cartoonist is like a joker in a pack of cards. He controls emotions with the strokes of pencil”.

Above all, the rich dose of refreshing, therapeutic humor which well crafted cartoons provide is what makes them invaluable, and Asukwo concurs. “The humor helps lighten the mood. We are all too stressed out in this country. We have been this way for far too long”. Fulke Greville wonders "Man is the only creature endowed with the power of laughter; is he not also the only one that deserves to be laughed at?" An example of humor in cartooning is an Omoba

cartoon which read: “**NEWS:** Tinubu to donate eyes after death”. To which Omoba replies: “A generous donor”. This cartoon alludes to the fact that the said erstwhile governor has big eyes. And with this, the duties of cartoonist could not have been more expressly stated.

2:3 Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on the individual differences theory. The rationale for selecting this theory variously described by Aina (2003: 184) as ‘Media Effects Theory’ and Akinfeleye (2008: 144) as ‘Theories in Human Development and Behaviour’, is that the theory bothers on mass media audience reaction to mass media messages. Since this study examines audience perception of the punch newspaper cartoons using Caritas University as a study, this theory suit the profile of this research study.

Individual Differences Theory

This theory was propounded by Melvin De Fleur in 1970. De Fleur posits that we, as human beings, are genetically different, biologically different, physiologically different and psychologically different, and therefore, we shall respond and behave differently (even as identical twins will still behave differently no matter the level and similarities of their identities) to media messages (Akinfeleye 2008: 126).

In responding and behaving differently to mass media messages according to their psychological needs, individuals consume mass media messages to satisfy their needs. According to <http://www.answers.com/topic/individual-differences-theory>, the need may be for information (e.g. providing statistics about players and teams), integrative (offering a sense of belonging to a group of similarly interested people), affective (e.g. by providing excitement), or escapist (helping to release pent-up emotions).

This theory, according to Onabajo et al (2008:131) assumes that:

1. Mass media audience are made up of different people (in terms of psychographic characteristics).
2. Members of the mass media audience will react to the same media messages in different ways. This is because of the differences in their psychographic characteristics.

In other words, this theory rejects the notion of uniform reaction to media fare as given by the bullet theory. It declares that audience behaviour to media messages differ in attitudes, personal preferences, perception, values, needs and the psychological make-up of individuals.

It points out that people use media fare selectively because messages contain stimulus that interact with specific personality feature of the audience, hence, creating differences in perception, cognition and responses. (Aina 2003: 187).

Therefore, Onabajo et al (2008:131) state that “the psychological processes – selective retention, selective attention, selective perception and selective exposure help an individual decide what to pay attention to, what he sees or perceives from that which he attends to”.

What this means is that Caritas University lecturers and students based on their genetical, biological, physiological and psychological differences will exhibit different readership behaviour to newspaper cartoons which is the media message in this case.

2:4 Summary of Literature Review

Newspaper cartoons have, however been employed as a tool for editorializing i.e. passing across the organization’s view on pertinent public or national issues. They have been used to accompany stories to illustrate what is written. Cartoons help sensitize people against social vices, thus facilitating positive human interaction, yet bearing in mind the entertainment function they are designed to serve.

Cartoons have proved to be very indispensable because while some individuals may not be literate enough to read and adequately understand the message contained in news stories, they are still able to have an understanding of cartoons and the recognition of the subject in such cartoons.

Hence, this chapter through the individual difference theory recognizes that as human beings, we are genetically different, biologically different, physiologically different and psychologically different, and therefore, we shall respond and behave differently (even as identical twins will still behave differently no matter the level and similarities of their identities) to media messages.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research method used in this study. The reason for choosing this method and other related issues are discussed.

3:1 Research Design

The method of investigation used for this study is survey research method. According to Tejumaiye (2003:85), “Survey research method scientifically samples and interviews people to analyze and report what they said”. According to Sobowale in Tejumaiye (2003:85), “The survey technique is the most commonly used research method by behavioral scientists”. He stressed that the method involves drawing up a set of questions on various subjects or on various aspects of a subject to which selected members of a population are requested to react.

Jacqueline P. Wiseman and Maricia S. Aaron (1970) in Tejumaiye (2003:88) offered an excellent definition of survey:

Survey research method is a method for collecting and analyzing social data via highly structured and often very detailed interviews or questionnaires in order to obtain information from large numbers of respondents presumed to be representative of a specific population.

Generally, survey data, according to Tejumaiye are collected through two methods. These are (1) Interviews and (2) Self-administered questionnaires.

For the purpose of this study, this researcher made use of interview surveys. Since this study borders on the readership of newspaper cartoons, personal interviews of the study population,

through questionnaires was used to study and determine the readership behaviour of newspaper cartoons readers.

The importance of survey is confirmed by the frequent reportage of survey research results in the popular media. This is particularly evident during election periods when opinion polls are conducted to ascertain candidates' popularity and/or position with the electorate.

This method is most appropriate because according to Sobowale (1983: 25) "the survey technique is the best method for measuring behavioral patterns, attitude and opinion". Apart from this, the survey method is most appropriate for this study because it involves large number of respondents presumed to be representative of a specific population, and as Osuala observes, the method affords an opportunity of asking questions from a large population.

3:2 Area of Study

The area of study has to do with the particular location of study. The area of the research work is precisely Caritas University Amorji-Nike, Enugu State.

3:3 Population of the Study

The population of this study is the students and lecturers of Caritas University.

The university's student population is 3052. It has total academic staff strength of 206. The population of this study is, therefore, the 206 academic staff and 3052 students' population.

3:4 Research Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Sample according to Obasi (2008) is defined as a small group of element or objects drawn through a definite procedure from the specified population. Sampling takes place because we cannot study the entire population.

Sampling techniques refers to the statistical method used to arrive at the sample size or at a good representation of the population.

According to Benson- Eluwa (2003), the best sampling technique is the random sampling which gives everyone in the population equal opportunity or chance to be selected.

From the entire population of 3258, the researcher was able to determine the number of respondents and find out the sample size (n) through Taro Yamani formula stated thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size

N = the entire population

E = Level of significance

I = Unit (Constant)

The researcher used above formula in order to get a befitting or appropriate sample size to ensure that the population of the study is adequately represented.

Based on this, the established data (n) were computed thus.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

$$n = \frac{3258}{1 + 3258(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3258}{1 + 3258(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{3258}{1 + 8.145}$$

$$n = \frac{3258}{9.145}$$

$$n = 356$$

Therefore, the sample size to be used is 356

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

Questionnaire was used as the instrument of collecting data for this study. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents for self administration since the respondents in question are literate. The questionnaire contained questions on demographic variables of the respondents and questions on the problem of study. It comprised mostly close-ended questions. There were fourteen close-ended questions as against five open-ended questions. The rationale for making close-ended questions preponderant in the instrument was to facilitate easy coding and uniformity of responses since manual coding was employed in analyzing the data collected. The questionnaires were collected by hand.

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

It is the degree to which a measuring instrument measures what is designed to measure. Asika, (1999) Reliability on the other hand is concerned with how consistent the result obtained with the instrument will be. It is the accuracy of a precision of a measuring instrument.

The actual validation on this research instrument was based on the simplicity and clarity of the question asked. The questions were related to the topic under study. However, to ensure the validity and reliability of the research measuring instrument (questionnaire). The researcher conducted a pilot study with 10 copies of questionnaire to ensure its accuracy.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

A total of three hundred and sixty (360) copies of questionnaire were approximately administered to selected respondents of Caritas University lecturers and students, the researcher also decided to use direct contact approach in administering the questionnaire. The method helped in reducing the percentage distraction.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The major techniques employed to analyze data were the use of chi-square (χ^2).

Chi-square (χ^2) is a measure of discrepancy existing between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of one; two, or more variables or chi-square is frequently used in testing hypotheses concerning the differences between asset of observed frequencies of a sample and corresponding set expected frequencies.

The formula for finding chi-square (χ^2) is statistically stated as:

$$X^2 = \sum (O-e)^2$$

Where χ^2 = chi-square

O= Observe frequency

e = Expected frequency

€ = Summation

The above mentioned methods were used by the researcher to collect data from respondents.

Decision

The data collected used chi-square (χ^2) test of independence to validate statistical hypotheses at 5% level of significance. To drive at a decision, the researcher used the decision rule.

Decision Rule: Reject Null Hypotheses (H_0) if the calculated is greater than the tabulated otherwise accept.

Chapter Four

Presentation and Analysis of Data

This chapter deals with the data presentation and analysis using simple percentage for clarity and easy understanding.

4:1 Data Presentation and Analysis

Distribution of the Questionnaire

Table 1

No of distributed questionnaire	%	No of recovered questionnaire	%	No of questionnaire not recovered	%	Total
360	100	150	42	210	58	100%

The researcher distributed three hundred and sixty (360) questionnaires to respondents, out of which one hundred and fifty (150) representing 42% were recovered. While two hundred and ten (210) representing 58% were wrongly filled or discarded, leaving the researcher with a total of one hundred and fifty (150) correctly filled and recovered questionnaire copy.

TABLE 2

GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF NEWSPAPER READERSHIP IN CARITAS UNIVERSITY

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	60	40
Female	90	60
TOTAL	150	100%

Of the 150 respondents, all read newspapers but not all read newspaper cartoons. Ten (10) respondents out of the 150, representing 7% stated that they do not read newspaper cartoons, while 93% of the respondents read newspaper cartoons. See Table 3

TABLE 3**NEWSPAPER CARTOON READERSHIP IN CARITAS UNIVERSITY**

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	140	93
No	10	7
TOTAL	150	100

From Table 3 above, it shows that the majority of Caritas University respondents read newspaper cartoon, however 93% of the respondents read newspaper cartoons, while 7% do not read newspaper cartoons.

TABLE 4**FREQUENCY OF NEWSPAPER CARTOON READERSHIP BY CARITAS STUDENTS**

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
7 days a week	10	7
6 days a week	13	9
5 days a week	23	15
4 days a week	32	21
3 days a week	28	19
2 days a week	18	12
1 day a week	6	4
Rarely	9	6
Never	11	7
TOTAL	150	100%

As earlier pointed out, all 150 student respondents read newspapers but not read newspaper cartoons. Table 4 shows that, 21% of student respondent accorded the highest frequency of those who read cartoons 4 days a week, while 19% followed with those who read cartoons 3 days a week, 15% also read cartoons 5 days a week, 12% read cartoons twice a week, 9% read cartoons 6 days a week, while 7% each of the frequency distribution in the table of

respondents read cartoons 7 days a week and never consequently, a paltry 6% rarely read cartoons and the least frequency of 4% read cartoons once a week.

TABLE 5
REASONS FOR READING NEWSPAPER CARTOONS AMONG CARITAS STUDENTS

REASONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Humour	60	40
Message	57	38
Entertainment	33	22
TOTAL	150	100

Table 5 revealed the most popular reason for reading newspaper cartoons by Caritas Students. 60% of respondents read newspaper cartoons for the humour they provide, 57% of the respondents read newspaper cartoons solely for the message therein, while a paltry sum of 33% read newspaper cartoons for entertainment reasons.

TABLE 6
IS READING CARTOONS ONE OF THE MOTIVATIONS FOR BUYING A NEWSPAPER

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	57	38
No	93	62
TOTAL	150	100

Research question three (3) sought to know if reading cartoons was one of the motivations for buying a newspaper. Table 6 provided the answer. Clearly, reading cartoons was not one of the motivations or reasons for buying newspapers among most Caritas respondents.

The table showed that 38% of the respondents are motivated by cartoons in buying newspaper, while 62% of the respondents are not motivated by cartoons in buying newspapers.

TABLE 7

APART FROM PUNCH, WHICH OTHER NEWSPAPERS DO THE RESPONDENTS READ THEIR CARTOONS

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
The Nation	47	31
The Guardian	30	20
Vanguard	29	19
This Day	20	13
The Sun	14	9
Business Day	10	7
TOTAL	150	100

Table 7 revealed that The Nation assumed the highest frequency of newspaper cartoons read apart from The Punch newspaper cartoons with an overwhelming 47%, coming next is The Guardian with 30%, Vanguard also came up with 29%, This Day recorded 20%, while The Sun had 14% and Business Day came least on the table with 10%.

TABLE 8**INFLUENCE OF CARTOON READERSHIP ON THE AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
16 - 20	12	8
21 - 25	20	13
26 - 30	28	19
31 - 35	34	23
35 and Above	56	37
TOTAL	150	100

As table 8 revealed, most of the respondents whose age had an influence on cartoon readership, 8%, were in the age bracket of 16 – 20, closely followed by the 21 – 25 age bracket with 13%. The 26 – 30 age brackets had a 19% readership base. Indeed, 23% of respondents were between 31- 35 years of age. Also 37% of those above the age of 35 read newspaper cartoons. Hence, it appeared that older people were more interested in reading cartoons than their younger counterparts.

TABLE 9**FREQUENCY OF NEWSPAPER CARTOON READERSHIP BY CARITAS LECTURERS**

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
7 days a week	60	40
6 days a week	45	30
5 days a week	42	28
4 days a week	3	2
3 days a week	–	–
2 days a week	–	–
1 day a week	–	–
Rarely	–	–
Never	–	–
TOTAL	150	100%

Remarkably, 40% of CARITAS lecturer respondents read newspaper cartoons on a daily basis. This may not be necessarily surprising because lecturers by the very nature of their work require information and knowledge. Newspapers, including newspaper cartoons are a veritable of information and knowledge. 30% of them read cartoons six days a week, while another 28% preferred to read cartoons five days a week and a paltry sum of 3% read cartoons four days in a week.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

In this section, the formulated hypotheses of the study were tested and the data were already presented and analyzed.

The chi-square (X^2) statistics was used to determine if there existed significant difference between the frequencies and research variable.

The formula for chi-square (X^2) given below

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where X^2 = Chi-square

O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency

\sum = Summation

Hypotheses 1

Hi: Caritas university lecturers and students are influenced by demographical factors such as age and sex in readership of newspaper cartoons.

Ho: Caritas university lecturers and students are not influenced by demographical factors such as age and sex in readership of newspaper cartoons.

Using table 8 and 16

Do demographical factors such as age influence the readership of newspaper cartoons?

Response	O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Strongly agree	100	40	60	3600	90
Agree	60	40	20	400	10
Strongly disagree	15	40	-25	625	15.6
Disagree	15	40	-25	625	15.6
No opinion	10	40	-30	900	225
Total	200				356.2

Source: Field work 2012.

Therefore the calculate chi-square

$$(X^2) = 356.2$$

Level of significance P; = 0.05

No of categories $df = (K - 1) = 5 - 1 = 4$

Table value = $X^2U = 9.488$

Decision rule: The calculated frequency is greater than the table value, $356.2 > 9.488$. Therefore, we reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that Caritas university lecturers and students readership of newspaper cartoons are influenced by demographical factors such as age.

Hypotheses 2

Hi: Newspaper cartoons are motivational factors for the buying of newspapers in Caritas University.

Ho: Newspaper cartoons are not motivational factors for the buying of newspapers Caritas University.

Using table 6 and 14

Do newspaper cartoons motivate the buying of newspapers in Caritas University?

Response	O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Strongly agree	100	50	50	2500	50
Agree	70	50	20	400	8
Strongly disagree	20	50	-30	900	18
Disagree	10	50	-40	1600	32
Total	200	50			108

Source: Field work 2012

Therefore the calculated chi-square (X^2) = 108

Level of significance P; = 0.05

No of categories df = (K – I) = 4 – 1 = 3

Table value = $X^2_v = 7.815$

Decision Rule: Since the calculated value is greater than the table value $108 > 7.815$ we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, which states that newspaper cartoons are motivational factors for the buying of newspapers in Caritas University.

4:3 Discussions of Findings

The result of the study indicates among other things that demographical factors such as age and sex have contributed immensely to the influence of readership of newspaper cartoons.

From the findings, it was observed that newspaper readers in Caritas University are influenced by demographical factors such as age and sex in readership of newspaper cartoons.

The formulated hypothesis for this study also proved right that demographical factors have an influence on newspaper cartoon readership.

The second hypotheses also states that newspaper cartoons are motivational factors for the buying of newspapers in Caritas University as deduced from the course of hypothetical study

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5:1 Summary

This study focused on: Patterns of readership of Newspaper Cartoons: A study of Caritas University Lecturers and Students. The researcher attempted to analyze the readership pattern and trend of the average Caritas University student and lecturer making use of survey method. It examined the extent and frequency of newspaper readership and newspaper cartoon readership among CARITAS lecturers and students. This study also addressed what motivated readers to read cartoons, which newspaper's cartoons were read the most, amongst other salient issues.

This study, based on the sample population, found out that all CARITAS students read newspapers but not all of them read newspaper cartoons. This study was able to find out that ninety three percent of CARITAS students, both male and female, read newspaper cartoons. However, more males read Newspaper cartoons than their female counterparts. Majority of those who loved to read cartoons were in the 21-25 years age bracket. Also, majority were in 200 levels and 300 levels.

All the lecturer respondents read newspapers and newspaper cartoons. Forty percent of them read newspaper cartoons on a daily basis. Thirty percent read cartoons six days a week while another twenty eight percent preferred to read cartoons five days a week. Although, this research project was not a comparison of newspaper cartoon reading habits between lecturers and students, but it was noteworthy that lecturers, perhaps expectedly, read newspapers and cartoons more frequently than students.

Remarkable is the knowledge that only seven percent CARITAS students read newspaper cartoons on a daily basis while a somewhat significant seven percent did not read newspaper cartoons at all. Four percent read cartoons once a week, six percent rarely did.

The humour and the inherent message in the cartoon were the primary reasons CARITAS students and lecturers adduced for reading cartoons. A handful fingered humour only or the message only as the sole reason for reading cartoons. other reasons mentioned for reading newspaper cartoons included: a source of fun and relaxation; highlighting the news behind the news, a source of additional news, a means of developing and improving one's drawing, analytical and humour skills, a mode of expression, providing information that is vital and current that may not be expressly stated.

Another major finding of this study was that reading cartoons was not one of the motivations or reasons for buying newspapers among most CARITAS students and lecturers as fifty-nine and eighty-one percent respectively stated that reading cartoons was not reason enough to buy newspaper. Again, fewer females in comparison to their male counterparts would buy a newspaper motivated by the urge to read the cartoons inside.

By a mile, *The Punch* newspaper's cartoons were the most read among CARITAS students and lecturers. *The Guardian* and *The Nation* newspaper's cartoons were also read by a significant number. *The Punch* newspaper's cartoons peaked as the clear favourite across board.

Amongst the students, majority who read cartoons were in the age bracket of 16 – 25. Very few were thirty and above, an indication that the younger students were more interested in reading cartoons than their older colleagues. An important point noted from the study was that among the student respondents cartoon readership decreased as they got older.

It was a different matter with lecturers. The older lecturers read as much cartoons as their younger colleagues indicating that the readership of cartoons cut across age barriers - both young and old newspaper readers read cartoons. This showed that newspaper cartoon readership, at least among the lecturers, had nothing to do with age. In fact, readership of cartoons increased with age, among the lecturers, contrary to findings among student. It was revealed that both male and female lecturers read newspaper cartoons as frequently as each other. Both males and females displayed an equal favourable disposition towards reading cartoons.

5:2 Conclusion

It is an incontrovertible fact that cartoons have slowly but surely become an integral and significant content in contemporary newspapers. Many newspaper publishers and editors have come to realize that cartoons are not just mere editorial items that are flippantly tucked away in the bottom corner of the inner pages of newspapers. Now, cartoons are seen as major editorial 'weapon' that are strategically and conspicuously placed in prominent pages. Amongst other numerous functions, cartoons not only tell the story behind the story, they tell the 'why' behind the 'what' and make you reflect over issues that we would otherwise gloss over. In an academic community such as Caritas University, the newspaper readership and newspaper cartoon readership rate was generally high among the students and even higher among the lecturers, expectedly so.

Yet, very few CARITAS students read newspapers on a daily basis, citing a busy academic schedule and a somewhat drab and dour outlook of some of the dailies as the reason they do not read newspapers on a daily basis. Lecturers and students alike read newspaper cartoons both for the humour value and the message value. Even at this, reading cartoons is not one of the reasons CARITAS lecturers and students buy newspapers because of the desire to.

Demographic attributes like age and sex had little influence on newspaper cartoon readership among students but no effect at all on newspaper cartoon readership among lecturers. *The Punch* Newspaper's cartoons peaked as the overwhelming favourite of Caritas University lecturers and students. *The Guardian* and *The Nation's* cartoons also had favourable look-ins.

5:3 Recommendations

Even though more newspapers are increasingly warming up to the use of cartoons, it is the view of this researcher that:

- a) still more newspapers need to embrace and exploit the full potentials cartoons have to offer.
- b) Cartoons should be used more strategically and effectively to address salient issues in humorous ways.
- c) Cartoons are a potent medium of expression.
- d) In all its subtlety and use of satire and humour, cartoons should not, and must not be misused. Restraint and an amount of self censorship must be encouraged.

This study showed that some of the less popular newspapers are less so because of their stingy use of cartoons, plus the small matter of their less than attractive cover page and inside page design and aesthetics. Famous *Punch* cartoonist, Aliu Eroje warned against the use of unnecessary name calling and libelous cartoons that do nothing but assassinate people's character. Hence, this researcher equally lends his voice to the effect that:

- e) Cartoonists should steer clear of issues that can cause libel because "libel costs millions".
- f) Religion, ethnicity, tribalism, sectionalism and bigotry should be downplayed in cartoons, and where possible done away with. It is a known saying that "people are very passionate

and sensitive about their religion and this has caused many conflicts”, hence, caution and restraint should be the watchword. This point should not be lost on cartoonists, and in fact should be made manifest in the art and art of cartooning.

5:4 Suggestions for Further Studies

In order to strengthen the purpose of this study, the researcher suggests that further studies should be carried out on other related topical issues such as reader perception of newspapers design: themes, purposes and effects of newspaper cartoons; roles and functions of newspaper cartoons in a democratic society; sensational cartooning and the Nigerian press and impact of cartoons on newspaper readership.

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Appendix
Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

My name is Okere Malcolm C, a final year student of the Department of Mass Communication, Caritas University. I am conducting a study on *the Readership of Newspaper Cartoons: A study of Caritas University Lecturers and Students* as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science B. Sc (Degree) in Mass Communication.

You have been randomly selected as one of the respondents of this study. Your objective and candid responses are required to the questions in the questionnaire. Kindly, note that this exercise is purely for academic purpose only. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidence. To guarantee your anonymity, do not write your name on the questionnaire.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours Sincerely

Okere Malcolm C.

Instructions

Please tick as appropriate against any statement or answer to each question in the brackets provided. Also, state your answers in the spaces provided.

1. Do you read newspapers?

Yes ()

No ()

2. Do you read newspaper cartoons?

Yes ()

No ()

3. How often do you read newspaper cartoons?

Seven days a week ()

Six days a week ()

Five days a week ()

Four days a week ()

Three days a week ()

Twice a week ()

Once a week ()

Rarely ()

Never ()

4. Do you understand the message(s) contained in cartoons?

Yes ()

No ()

5. How often do you understand the message(s) contained in cartoons?

All the time ()

Most of the time ()

Sometimes ()

Never ()

6. Do you enjoy reading newspaper cartoons?

Yes ()

No ()

7. What are your reasons for reading newspaper cartoons?

For the Humor ()

For the message ()

Both ()

Any other reasons(s)? Kindly state them.....

.....
.....
8. Which newspaper in your opinion publishes the most interesting cartoons?

.....

9. Which newspaper in your opinion publishes the least interesting cartoons?

.....

10. Is reading cartoons one of your reasons for buying newspapers?

Yes ()

No ()

11. Do you think cartoons are for less intelligent people?

Yes ()

No ()

12. Do you think cartoons add any value to newspapers?

Yes ()

No ()

13. What is your sex?

Male ()

Female ()

14. Are you a student or lecturer?

Student ()

Lecturer (). (If you are a lecturer, skip to Question 17)

15. If you are a student, what is your age bracket?

16 – 20 ()

21 – 25 ()

26 – 30 ()

31 – 35 ()

35 and above ()

16. As a student, what is your course of study?

17. What is your level of study?

18. If you are a lecturer, what is your age bracket?

30 – 35 ()

36 – 40 ()

41 – 45 ()

46 – 50 ()

50 and above ()

19. As a lecturer, what department do you belong to?