



Research Paper

Analyzing the Evolution of Internet Humour: Memes and More

Chitra Adkar*

PhD Scholar, Center for the Study of Social Systems,
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Abstract: This paper attempts to trace the evolution of many forms of humour on the internet, focusing on memes. Several changes in technology have enabled a wider circulation of humour and have democratized the online space where new content creators find space to make their mark every day. The paper aims to find what makes this mediated space, like various social media made available by the internet, appealing and how this form of mediated communication provides scope for creative expression. In addition to an analytic review of this evolution, the paper specifically focuses on memes and analyzes them through a lens of the classic theories of humour. This exercise aims to determine what ensures that the masses find internet humour appealing and examine if one can narrow down certain characteristics of internet humour, especially memes, that are instrumental in setting them apart from other phenomena on the internet.

Keywords: Internet, humour, memes, mediated communication

Received 10 July, 2022; Revised 23 July, 2022; Accepted 25 July, 2022 © The author(s) 2022.
Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

I. Introduction

When a researcher delves into the fields like internet studies or digital sociology with a focus on popular culture, they must come to terms with the simple but profound fact that the virtual domain is a real site of study. At the same time, the researcher should also bear in mind that their findings from their research on the internet are a part of a bigger idea of the 'social' which encompasses the non-virtual domains as well. This paper is an attempt to trace the course of how the internet as a mediated space has enabled people to share humour (among other things) and how that evolution of humour, in turn, helped people make a space for themselves, both in the real and the virtual domain.

In 2022, it is quite difficult to envision the development of discourse relating to any topic without social media, especially memes, edits, mashups and other forms of humour on the internet that is brief and to the point. This is common in election campaigns, university spaces, social activism, promotion of movies or web series, and as a response to news; the behaviour of posting what one finds funny about practically everything has become a common practice. A few decades back, a newspaper cartoonist would have a few inches of their space, daily or for selected days of a week and these cartoons were an outlet for satirical takes people would or could have, it was an expression of what the society would assume to be the position of ordinary people. R K Laxman's 'common man'ⁱ, a typical example of this, stood out in the pre-digital era and so did the Amul girlⁱⁱ who would be the face of humour concerning any current affairs. The arrival of the internet changed this scenario, perhaps not at the same pace at all times, but slowly and steadily 'Twitter wars'ⁱⁱⁱ have started receiving more importance than what happens in non-digital spaces. The following section will briefly take note of how the spread of the internet has led to the evolution of mediated communication and how have these mediated spaces created room for more actors.

II. Mediated Communication and Humour: From Forwarded Emails to TikToks

Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited or VSNL for short launched on August 15, 1995; a decade before that from 1986, internet services were only available for educational and research purposes in limited places. VSNL introduced the internet to the masses, however, due to the limits on its usage and relatively expensive plans, a limited number of people had access to it. Very few people had a home PC^{iv} with internet and cybercafes or internet cafes were frequented by those who wanted to use the internet. People started creating their email IDs on various websites like rediffmail.com, yahoo.com, Indiatimes.com, etc. This email ID was the new letterbox,

where an 'inbox' could receive hundreds if not thousands of emails from anyone who knew one's email ID. The first form of circulation of internet humour can be listed as websites along with forwarded emails. E.g., A website like *masalatimes.com* would share Bollywood-related humour. One had to type in a URL^v to visit a webpage that might have a section of jokes or animated videos that would be funny. At the same time, text-based jokes would be forwarded through emails as well.

Mobile phones with internet services were not as common till the last decade. However, the email-based humour had already shrunk in terms of the words it uses to fit SMS^{vi} and people had started switching to this medium. With the introduction of internet packs or data packs from cellphone service provider companies, an app called WhatsApp became more common and people resumed the practice of sharing longer jokes. These jokes and much other text-based information, which may or may not be accompanied by audiovisual attachments, all belong to a category of 'WhatsApp forwards'^{vii} and are a commonly used medium for communication used till this day. This app inevitably brings in the smartphone; a device that is better compatible with all Android applications as well applications from other operating systems (OS). These applications or apps as they are referred to commonly can condense the internet to one's phone. For instance, a user of Facebook would any day prefer using the Facebook app as opposed to switching on one's personal computer and then navigating to the Facebook website. It would not be an exaggeration to say that smartphones are practically speaking, 'internet in one's hand'.

A smartphone provides multiple options to its user to keep themselves entertained; in addition to Facebook and WhatsApp, there are apps like YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, Discord, Reddit, etc. A wider variety of options is offered to the user and they are free to engage and/or disengage with certain people they connect with through these apps or with the app altogether. In other words, a person can choose to delete their Instagram at one point or deactivate their Facebook account. The user also has a choice, a person having a greater inclination to reading could read posts on Reddit while an individual who prefers listening would listen to a compilation of Reddit posts on YouTube^{viii}. The amount of participation is also determined by an individual user's volition, some choose to engage with other users while some lurk or some post original content while some leave likes on others' posts.

Some attention must be paid to the nature of this mediated content found on social media. One must acknowledge the relevance that the internet would hold while studying forms of humour. Internet would be seen as a network, as a space that contains activity or even as a space that holds memory. Since this paper would mainly focus on studying memes, one would have to establish how the internet contains has been instrumental in creating this form of humour. Before getting into details about the same, one must bring in Manuel Castells' and his distinction between virtual reality and real virtuality[1]. He recognizes that these virtual components that the internet has to offer, such as social networking websites, content shared therein, etc. are a part of the reality we live. He has given the concept of timeless timeto emphasize the global nature of exchanges that occur in the way they do on the internet[1]. He maintains that this culture of real virtuality is an important component of the new economy of the network society.

Before heading on to a detailed discussion on internet humour vis-à-vis theories of humour, it is important to enlist the several options a user of the internet has today. WhatsApp is used for more than 'forwards', it can be used for audio and video calls as well as for sending moderately heavy attachments and as a mode of payment. Apps like DubsSmash that were used for compiling the user's visual with the audio from a popular movie, series, cartoon, etc. are less in use. Their technological successors that allow the creation of shallowfakes^{ix} like Snapchat or TikTok are used widely. TikToks are usually shorter in length and now YouTube, Facebook and Instagram have launched their options like shorts and reels that allow sharing audiovisual content that has the length of a TikTok.

III. Why Study Memes?

While a lot of research that critically analyses the content of internet humour has been conducted since its emergence, one is still intrigued by certain less explored questions about this area. To elaborate, many studies have brought forth the aspects of race and gender in memes and similar forms of humour. Researchers argue how certain websites and forums that circulate this humour operate, how they exclude participants, what could be the potential background of those being excluded, etc. However, the creators of humour and other participants, who may not be the object of ridicule, are often not in focus. There is a need to delve deeper into their behaviour and study it to develop a deeper understanding of how internet humour works, primarily to find out why would a person find something funny.

For instance, a meme usually isn't addressed to a person, yet it remains to be a form of communication which could have verbal and non-verbal components to it. Reducing the nature of something like that to it being a part of the digital world would be an oversimplification. Several meme pages on Facebook, remain stuck in the cycle of being mass reported, taken down and recreated. In the Indian context, such groups circulate humour that is based on mockery; several pages that share casteist humour (like pages dedicated to mocking reservation

policy) are seen reappearing from time to time. By the time they reappear, they start to deploy newer strategies of saving themselves from being taken down as their understanding of the Facebook algorithm has bettered over this time. For instance, a page mocking religion would use words such as ‘Buslim’ instead of ‘Muslim’ or ‘Dindu’ instead of ‘Hindu’. There are no standard user manuals available that help people decode such new terms, instead, the people active on such pages can figure it out on their own as they are actively involved in the circulation of such problematic humour.

There are a few reforms in policies of social media platforms that have come up in recent years to counter these legal issues, e.g. Twitter’s policy to terminate accounts on dead-naming of transgender persons or Facebook’s automated check for certain politically incorrect terminology (a word like ‘retard’ might get one’s comment deleted without being reported). This indicates that as a society people are actively recognizing the involvement of actual persons in the process of creating humour on the internet. Miller and Slater have also spoken of the dual function virtuality would serve, that it not only creates means of interactions but also modes of representation too. They define it, as ‘the capacity of communicative technologies to constitute rather than mediate realities and to constitute relatively bounded spheres of interaction.’[2] To elaborate further, the study of internet humour is not simply the study of the internet, which happens to be a medium. It is a study of society in the domain of the virtual. If the mediated content can make space for mockery and hate speech, it also forces one to recognize the newer forms of hate speech and sites of oppression while allowing the creation of space to counter the same.

IV. Theories of Humour: Do They Explain Everything?

Primarily there are three theories of humour, incongruity theory, superiority theory and relief theory. This section discusses those theories in brief and examines if they hold relevance in today’s era when one is faced with the task of analyzing memes.

To begin with, Immanuel Kant’s comments on laughter are at the core of the theory of incongruity. He says, “Something absurd (something in which, therefore, the understanding can of itself find no delight) must be present in whatever is to raise a hearty convulsive laugh. *Laughter is an affection arising from a strained expectation being suddenly reduced to nothing.*”[3] Arthur Schopenhauer, who is also a proponent of this theory sees laughter as something emerging out of the relation two objects have in reality and a perceived relation between them. Often, they are thought of together as one concept and assume an ‘identity’, one finds that this ascribed concept isn’t applicable for both and this ‘unexpected subsumption’ generates laughter. To him, the incongruity is the presence of something ‘ludicrous’[4].

Superiority theory dates back to ancient Greece. In the Republic, Plato remarks that the objects of laughter are ‘what is foolish and wrong’. He argues that the ideal society’s guardians, then, should not be ‘too fond of laughter’ and so no literature portraying gods or other reputable characters as overcome with laughter can be permitted. In *Philebus*, Plato discusses what he considers to be ‘the true character of the comic is self-ignorance. Self-ignorance manifests itself in a man’s imagining himself as better than he really is, either in terms of wealth, physical characteristics such as height or good looks, or virtue (especially wisdom).’[5] The most discussed proponent of the theory however has been Hobbes. He has looked down upon laughter given his understanding of it as something associated with ‘scorn’, that ‘great minds’ shouldn’t be[6].

The relief theory, also known as the release theory, is mainly built upon the contributions of Herbert Spencer and Sigmund Freud. Freud’s theory has been credited as the one which explains most aspects of humour. He classifies jokes as tendentious and non-tendentious based on whether there’s hostility and lust. What he finds common among, them is that ‘all are dominated by a tendency to compression, or rather to saving. It all seems to be a question of economy.’[7] Spencer’s theory is quite different and builds upon the idea of laughter being stored as nervous energy in the body. He argues that laughter is a form of muscular excitement, and so illustrates the general law that feeling passing a certain pitch habitually vents itself in bodily action’[8].

To understand if these theories help explain memes and eventually help understand why is internet humour so appealing, a simple analysis of these theoretical lenses helps a researcher to view humour as necessary. A meme is a visual format of humour wherein there is a picture with text on the top or the bottom or both. Sometimes the text is imposed on the picture and sometimes it is added as a caption above the picture. Any image can be used to generate a meme, however, there are popular templates which are used quite often. E.g., Drakeposting is a popular form of generating memes^x. It involves four squares in the image, the left-hand side squares contain two images of the rapper Drake from his popular video ‘Hotline Bling’^{xi}. In the top image, he uses his hand to cover his face thus signalling refusal to something or some issue and in the lower picture he has a smile on his face with a finger raised towards something that he approves of. A person generating a meme is supposed to insert a picture or text of something he doesn’t want in the top right square and a picture or text of what he approves in the lower right square. As an example, one can write HR workshops next to the disapproving Drake and lower work hours next to the approving Drake. This would help one condense a serious

argument which has to do with workers' rights and requirements in a light vein. In one way, the relief theory of humour can be used to explain a meme like that. Another example would make a comparison between 'sheltered workshops' as an alternative Drake would not approve of for inclusive education and employment generation and would instead approve of supported employment^{xii}.

Yet another common template used in memes showcases a man as the most interesting man in the world; it is an image initially borrowed from Dos Equis' marketing campaign^{xiii}. A meme generated out of this template has a top and bottom caption, on the top, it says 'I Don't Always Use Internet Explorer' and on the bottom, it reveals the other half of his statement which states 'But When I Do It's To Download a Different Browser'^{xiv}. Although a meme like that would make a mockery of the Internet Explorer as a browser, one needs more than the superiority theory of laughter to explain the humour here. Along with looking down on something, the format of the meme is also allowing a release by posing the joke in a non-confrontational manner, thus one could argue there is some release therein. The incongruity theory of humour explains most internet humour that is of this day and age. One could argue that it is not simply limited to memes, but covers most formats of cracking a joke in a mediated context. Using a Hindi film song with substandard choreography and creating a mashup of the same with a K-Pop song is typical of mashups and edits^{xv}. The basic premise of juxtaposing two things that don't belong together and showcasing them in a humorous manner is at the centre of most internet humour today.

Leaving aside the newer forms of internet humour, one must revisit the question of appeal that this paper is trying to study in detail. So far, one can acknowledge that memes are funny, at least they are funny to someone at some point, however, is that the only factor that makes them popular. What are the other factors that are responsible for the life of memes on the internet, where it is rather common for newer formats of content to disappear into nowhere is also a question that needs exploring. The following section will draw arguments that make a case for the same.

V. Why do Memes 'Work'?

Several scholars have put forth a plethora of arguments on the subject of memes found on the internet. While the section above discussed how and why is laughter generated with a focus on how theories regarding the same can explain why consumers of internet humour find memes funny, this section would explore the issue of form. The content of a joke or any humorous expression can be analysed by social scientists keeping in mind theoretical frameworks constructed for analysing the subjects that are closely associated with it. However, the style of delivery and the form of expression is equally important to make such analyses more wholesome. A meme is primarily visual and the lack of verbosity that makes it succinct and hard-hitting is often responsible for why certain memes go viral. If the same joke were delivered without visual aid, it may have less of an impact. This section will briefly summarize the existing arguments about internet memes in social sciences and attempt to come up with a working formula of what makes a meme work or what makes it popular and easily understandable to the masses.

SusanBlackmore[9] says that memes are often successful because they are memorable, rather than because they are important or useful. Ideas that are meaningful or make sense to people are more likely to become memes than ideas that are not easily copied or understood by a large number of people[10]. LimorShifman defines a meme as 'a piece of cultural information that passes along from person to person but gradually scales into a shared social phenomenon'. She also says that memes impact on the macro level even though they spread on a micro level[11]. She also describes internet memes as 'groups of digital items sharing common characteristics of *content* (the idea or the ideology of a specific text), *form* (the physical incarnation of the message which is perceived through our senses), and *stance* (the information a meme conveys about their communication, how the addresser positions themselves in relation to the text) as a way to evaluate certain meme contents'. Shifman says that sharing, repackaging, imitation, and selection are important attributes of internet memes. Sharing has become the term to describe many activities happening online: uploading, updating, and commenting. The repackaging mechanisms are mimicry and remix, mimicry meaning imitating, impersonating, redoing or recreating the content while remixing involves technology-based manipulation or re-editing content[11]. It has to be taken into account that viral content spreads differently on different social media websites and new technologies able content to spread, for example, with the help of hashtags (#), sharing, re-blogging, tagging, and retweeting are processes that make paths of memetic objects visible[12].

Chip and Dan Heath[13] have found six principles of *sticky* content: simplicity, unexpectedness, concreteness, credibility, emotions, and stories. Telling a story that creates emotions, is simple, concrete (easy to grasp, memorable, and possibly identifiable), unexpected, and credible (believing in personal experience, faith, authorities, science, or statistics when exposed to a story) increases its possibilities to stick. ChristianBauckhage defines internet memes as phenomena that rapidly gain popularity or notoriety on the Internet[14]. He also says that memes are a phenomenon that defies social and cultural boundaries. Internet memes spread among people using e-mail, instant messaging, forums, blogs, or social networking sites[14].Nooney and Portwood-Stacer

describe memes as digital objects that repeat a visual, textual, or auditory form and are then appropriated, re-coded, and slotted back into the Internet infrastructures they came from[12].

These researchers and theorists are stressing upon how information is being mediated and formulating definitions and concepts based on the same. A study of memes thus would be primarily grounded in the study of mimetics that predates the digital era. In addition to the same, several references are being made to theories that study human psychology and cognition. If one were to draw out some characteristics of memes and internet humour from these arguments, the reproduction of content will be one of those primary characteristics. For instance, the idea of an ‘insider joke’ is contingent on the fact that a select group of members that are privy to certain information can understand the said insider joke; an example would be a secret nickname assigned to a co-worker. As opposed to that memes, owing to their format, are meant to be shared. To build upon Shifman’s schema, even if the content would keep changing or altering, the form and stance would be the same and the latter would make it easier for people to keep on reproducing memes. As an example, one could go back to Drakeposting as a phenomenon. Drakeposting is so popular and common that a comedy troupe in India called AIB collaborated with a popular actor, the late Irrfan, to reproduce the template featuring the actor’s face instead of Drake^{xvi}. The idea of disapproving of one object or idea while approving the other remained the same. Several people alter the Drakeposting template and superimpose the faces of any other celebrity to drive through the same point.

The second characteristic that needs to be noted is closely related to reproduction would be that of having universal appeal. This is not to say that every meme or every form of humorous expression would be understood by all members of society; instead, the implication is that everyone is capable of interpreting memes as long as they have access to them. Popular meme templates like the most interesting man in the world or Willy Wonka^{xvii} from the movie ‘Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory’ or the disaster girl^{xviii} have been used by members of several social groups. It may sound simplistic, but the idea that a person of a different race and nationality could also be instrumental in getting a message through is extraordinary and would not be possible without the internet. Owing to this very idea of universal appeal, sometimes official accounts of bureaucrats, government offices, ministries, police departments, etc. have used memes to broaden their reach to the masses. E.g. In January 2019, the official Twitter handle of Mumbai police used a template from a popular movie Gully boy for sending out a message on traffic safety. The text inserted above the image said ‘When he argues to ride a motorcycle without a helmet #SillyBoy’ and the image showed the female protagonist of the movie saying the words ‘*mar jayega re tu*’ (you will die for sure) to her boyfriend[15]. There was an element of wordplay and owing to the popularity of the film, most people could partake in this humorous exchange.

This brings forth another characteristic of memes that has been crucial for their popularity and up to an extent explains why memes have not died out like other forms of humour. Internet websites and mobile applications keep updating themselves and in this process, several newcomers enter the market and disappear into nothingness. A few examples of the same could be apps like DubSmash or Vines. Other apps have a limited reach despite the fact they have survived for a substantial amount of time, this may include Discord, Reddit or Snapchat. These websites and apps come with their unique format of content creation and memes are present everywhere, on these moderately popular apps and websites as well as the more common ones like Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. The adaptability of a meme can transform its original jpeg form into video-based templates as well. Also, while several meme templates are officially purchased from people featured in photos that are viral on the internet, a template can be created by simply using any screengrab, photo or video, from the latest phenomenon in popular culture. Owing to the popularity internet humour has received, creators of movies, web series, and original videos owned by the firms in the press, have all ‘given in’ and usually refrain from contesting copyright-related issues when it comes to the emergence of a new template. It is quite difficult to name a characteristic like that but one could argue that the adaptability and the succinct nature of memes is responsible for why they go viral. The following section would discuss the conclusions one can draw from this overview of the evolution of humour in its various forms.

VI. Concluding Remarks

Most academic arguments in media studies, especially new media studies, often attempt to position themselves around McLuhan’s classic phrase ‘medium is the message’ which by itself is a lens through which academics examine their objects of study as opposed to an assertion[15]. When we speak of information mediated through the internet, the internet itself is one medium but not the only one. A layer-by-layer peeling process of any piece of information on the internet or content requires a holistic and thorough analysis. One of the reasons why this paper adopts an evolutionary approach to understand why society is consuming internet humour heavily and regularly is to acknowledge that the very process of consumption itself has democratized. A basic internet plan and an affordable smartphone have the potency to bring its user at par with people that are economically better off than the former. One could dare say that very limited content on the internet if one doesn’t include raw data, is exclusive; most artefacts on the internet are accessible to all. There is also a barrage

of information and while the users are many, all of them get a stake in collectively determining what is successful, what is popular and extrapolating from that, one could say that the masses collectively define what is good as well. For instance, a good meme is a meme that works for all.

One must also understand that people's collective memory is subject to constant reinforcement and validation received through the information available online. The Amul girl posters mentioned previously are now first seen on the internet and not the actual billboards. Digitally manipulated content posted on the internet is seen as the legitimate stands taken by the individual or the organization posting them. There have been instances of criminal proceedings initiated against people who post digitally manipulated content, including memes, Snapchat stories, reels, etc. One must also note that it is very difficult to erase the digital footprint of any information posted online. The adaptable nature of internet humour enables users to keep on reproducing their expression even when companies take down content posted by them. While a thematic analysis of what lies at the 'butt of the joke' makes the study of interdisciplinary and a very wide topic, a specific analysis of the role of the internet in the evolution of humour helps narrow down and shape the analysis one undertakes. The internet not only acts as a medium but perhaps could be seen as a representation of the complex realities we live in. Such research would certainly help in determining what are the important questions to ask and how to answer them.

Endnotes

The Common Man is an original cartoon character created by R K Laxman that has appeared in the 'You Said It' section in the Times of India

ⁱⁱIt is the mascot of dairy products' company Amul and the advertising strategy uses cartoon-based humour featuring this mascot. The ads are displayed on actual billboards and since the arrival of the internet most new ads get shared in an even quicker manner than before.

ⁱⁱⁱRefers to back and forth replies between two or several user accounts on the platform Twitter that showcase engagement in conflict.

^{iv}PC or personal computer with a desktop setup would be more common than laptops in the early years of digitization in India.

^vURL stands for Uniform Resource Locator which is the address of anything digital shared on the internet; it is often used interchangeably with link.

^{vi}SMS (short message service) has a word limit.

^{vii}'Forwards' or its singular form is commonly used to refer to the forwarded content.

^{viii}Several genres on reddit that use the nomenclature as 'r/xyz' are shared in video and narrated compilations of the same on YouTube. E.g., Wedding related disastrous stories would be under 'r/weddingdisasters' or vengeful stories would be under 'r/prorevenge'. Users that do not wish to create accounts on multiple social media websites and apps often turn in to compilations. Indian who cannot use TikTok after the ban on the app in their country since 2020 watch TikTok compilations of Facebook and YouTube.

^{ix}Shallow fakes are the opposite of deepfakes. They are digitally manipulated content where the manipulation is easily detectable on account of the format. Hence one can infer that they are used for enhancement or humourous purposes as opposed to deception which would be associated with deepfakes.

^{xx}Drake is a Canadian rapper and 'Drakeposting' is a term used to refer to the creation of memes based on a template featuring him. It is common to name meme templates for easy understanding and quick reference.

^{xi}See <https://en.meming.world/wiki/File:Drakeposting.jpg/>

^{xii}See

^{xiii}See <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator/The-Most-Interesting-Man-In-The-World>

^{xiv}See <http://www.quickmeme.com/meme/2vzf>

^{xv}The mashup of a Hindi song called 'ChunariChunari' with a BTS dance practice video is a good example illustrating this phenomenon. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AML0hkRWwY>

^{xvi}See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3qoXx1zSaw>

^{xvii}See <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator/18672402/Willy-Wonka-Blank>

^{xviii}See <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator/Disaster-Girl>

Works Cited

- [1]. M. Castells, "The Rise of the Network Society," in *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Vol. I*, Malden, MA, Oxford UK, 1996.
- [2]. D. Miller and D. Slater, "Conclusions," in *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*, Uk, Berg, Oxford, 2000, pp. 4-11.
- [3]. I. Kant, "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment," in *Critique of Judgment*, James Creed Meredith (tr.), Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1790/2007, p. 54.
- [4]. A. Schopenhauer, "The Objectification of the Will," in *The World as Will and Idea (Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung)*, tr. R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp., London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1818/1844, pp. 127-140.
- [5]. J. Lippitt, *Philosophical Perspectives on Humour and Laughter*, Durham: Durham University, 1991.
- [6]. T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 1651, Menston: Scolar P 1969, 1651.
- [7]. S. Freud, "The Technique of Jokes," in *Jokes and their relation to the unconscious*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1976, pp. 16-28.
- [8]. H. Spencer, "On the Physiology of Laughter," in *Essays on Education and Kindred Subjects*, London, Dent, 1911, pp. 298-310.
- [9]. S. Blackmore, "Three Problems with Memes," in *The Meme Machine*, Oxford, OUP, 1999, p. 57.
- [10]. M. Knobel and C. Lankshear, "Online Memes, Affinities and Cultural Production," in *A New Literacies Sampler* (ed. Knobel & Lankshear), New York, Peter Lang Publishing, 2007, pp. 201-202.
- [11]. L. Shifman, "Memes in a Digital World: Reconciling with a Conceptual Troublemaker," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 362-377, 2013.
- [12]. L. Nooney and L. Portwood-Stacer, "Article Menu Download PDF [PDF] Open EPUB Accessing resources off campus can be a challenge. Lean Library can solve it Lean Library Full Article Content List Acknowledgements Article Metrics Cite Share Request Permissions Related Articles One Does," *Journal of Visual Culture* 13, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 248-252, 2014.
- [13]. C. Heath and D. Heath, "Made to stick: Why some ideas survive and others die," in *Introduction*, New York, Random House, 2007, pp. 16-18.
- [14]. C. Bauchhage, "Insights into Internet Memes," in *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*, Barcelona, 2011.
- [15]. D. Mowke, "Mumbai Police tweets road safety meme from Ranveer's 'Gully Boy'," *InShorts*, Mumbai, 2019.
- [16]. M. McLuhan and L. H. Lapham, "Introduction, The Medium is the Message," in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, New York, MIT Press, 1994, pp. 3-7.