



Notice for the PhD Viva-Voce Examination

Mr Mitul Joseph Koickakudy, Registration Number: 1980401, PhD Scholar at the Department of Media Studies, School of Social Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore will defend his PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Monday, 08 September 2025 at 9.30 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru – 560029, Karnataka, India.

Title of the Thesis	:	Understanding Political Memes: Themes, Modes and Composition in the Context of 2021 Kerala Assembly Election
Discipline	:	Media Studies
External Examiner - I	:	Dr Krishnan Unni P Associate Professor Department of English Deshbandhu College (University of Delhi) Kalkaji, New Delhi - 110019
External Examiner - II	:	Dr A F Mathew Professor Humanities and Liberal Arts in Management Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode IIMK Campus Post, Kozhikode Kerala - 673570
Supervisor	:	Dr Meljo Thomas Assistant Professor Department of Media Studies School of Social Sciences CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Bengaluru – 560029 Karnataka

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 03 September 2025


Registrar (Academics)

ABSTRACT

As digital communication continues to shape political discourse, memes have emerged as a potent tool for conveying complex political messages in concise, often humorous formats. This research aims to unravel the multifaceted nature of memes and their role in shaping public opinion during a crucial democratic process. The study adopts an interpretative paradigm to analyze a corpus of 307 memes circulated during the election period. Three methodological approaches are employed to provide an understanding of the memes' content and structure: thematic analysis, multimodal analysis, and genre analysis. These methods address the major themes, meaning-making components, and compositional strategies of political memes during the election.

The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how digital media, particularly memes, influence political communication and public engagement in contemporary democratic processes. By focusing on the Kerala Assembly election, the research provides insights into the localized adaptation of global meme culture within a specific political and cultural context. This study has implications for political strategists, policymakers, and media scholars seeking to comprehend the dynamics of online political discourse. It highlights the potential of memes as both a reflection of public sentiment and a tool for shaping political narratives. The insights gained contribute to the broader fields of political communication, digital media studies, and electoral research, while also offering practical implications for understanding and engaging with evolving forms of political discourse in the digital age.

Keywords: *Memes, Culture, Media, Political Communication, Multimodality*

Publications:

1. **Koickakudy, M.** & Karakunnel, M. (2023). Memes as multimodal ensemble. *Multimodal Communication*, 12(3), 223-243. <https://doi.org/10.1515/mc-2023-0052>
2. **Koickakudy, M. J.**, The 'Magical Negro' in Malayalam Cinema Politics of Skin Tone, Caste and Religion, *Economic & Political Weekly*, 16, 16, 64–65, 2021