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**REVISITATION OF MYTH THROUGH MULTIMODAL TEXT: A FACILE  
LEARNING-AID TO COMPREHEND, COMPARE, CO-RELATE AND ENHANCE  
CREATIVITY.**

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**Abstract**

Digital Age has promoted digitalisation of almost every human social-need like communication, business, governance, education, exchange etc. With respect to the knowledge domain, digitalisation has escalated its zenith to that great heights that it is only a finger touch away from its seekers and can reach anybody, anywhere through multi-fold audio and visual impact. Due to its success in meeting the desirable expectation of simplifying and permanenting knowledge, experimentation to design new digital learning aids is encouraged. The paper explores the use of multimodal digitalised graphic text as a learning aid to study myth by analysing the multimodal graphic images of revisiting Ramayana by 'Scroll Droll'. The 22 graphical images of Revisiting Ramayana and Mahabharata with a digital perspective elucidates mythical story of Ramayana along with allowing the learners to compare and co-relate the past and the present. As a literary text, the paper identifies how the images of 'Scroll Droll' intends to Deconstruct and expand the original Myth in a humorous way in order to bridge the gap between the past and the present. It also lays its focus on acknowledging the effectiveness of multimodal image texts as a facile learning aid to impart mythical knowledge to people of any age group irrespective of their educational background. The Paper attempts to find out how these texts can liberate human thinking by paving way for creativity and self-perception.

**Keywords:** Digitalisation, Multi modal Graphic Image, Re-visit, Deconstruct and Facile Learning Aid

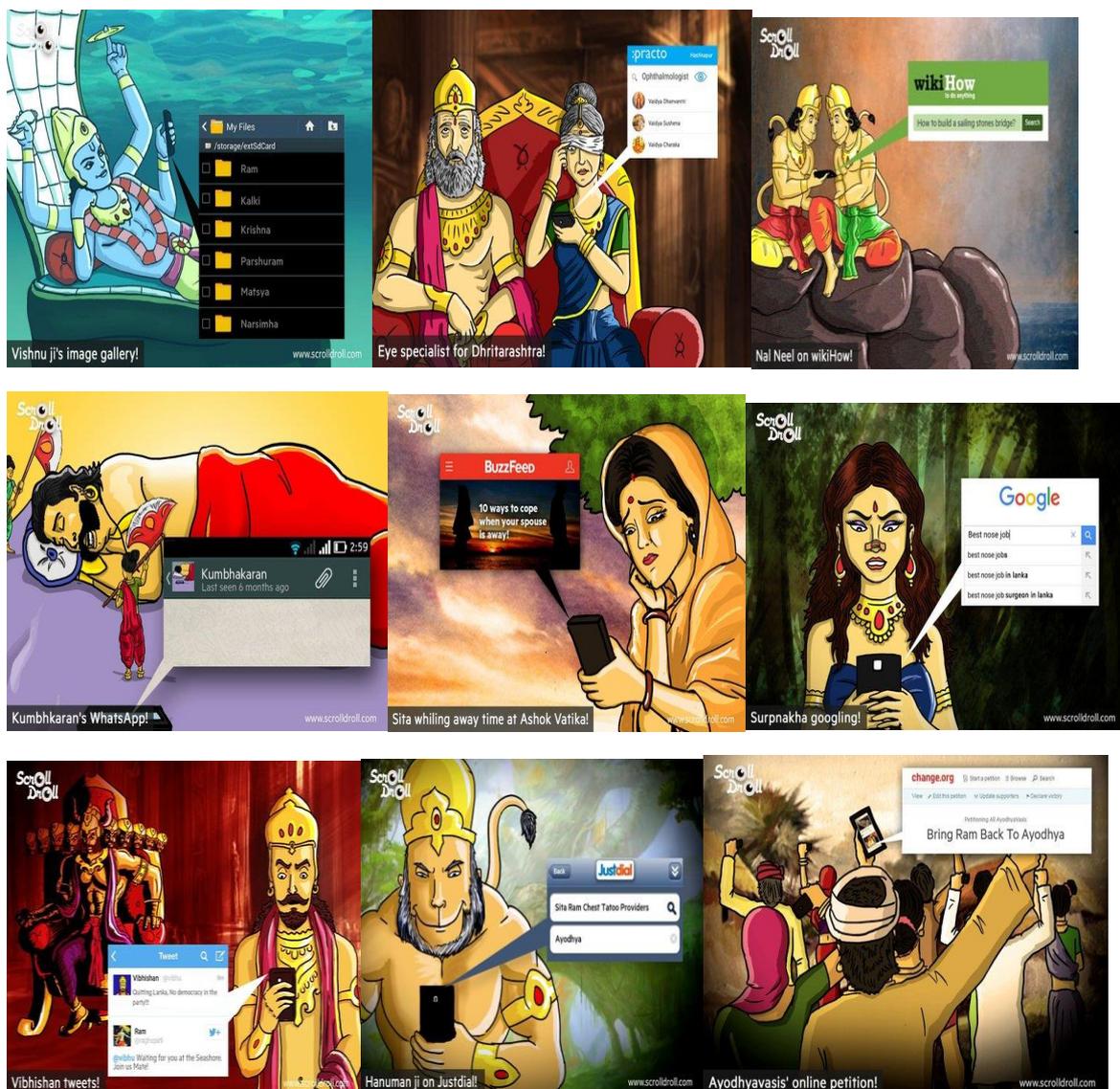
*“Social Media has created a historical shift from historically powerful to historically powerless. Now everyone has a voice.”*

- Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer, Face Book, U.S.A.

Digitalisation has enhanced the potential of all walks of knowledge. It has bettered several fields like commerce, education, social interaction, governance, scientific explorations etc. The social media through its social forums like Email, Face Book, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, You Tube, Search Engines like Google, Yahoo etc. has given an individual identity for everyone to express himself/herself and also accept deviant views. Today, a person who owns

a social account is no less than a writer who expresses his ideas to the world and therefore the digital texts uploaded can also be considered as an academical text. This text can be analysed, studied, decoded to understand the idea and note the pattern of human thought process. The paper intends to explore the benefits of such digital multimodal texts. It aims to analyse how it can serve as a facile learning aid and meet the goals of education.

‘Scroll Droll’, an online platform to showcase digital creativity creates content that can inspire or delight the viewers and one of the recent posts which include a graphical text series of Indian Mythological stories stands as an illustration to multimodal text that attempts to revisit myth with a fresh perspective. The paper intends to unfold the uses of multimodal mythical texts that can enable learners to compare, contrast, decode or extend the original myth and there by bridge the gap between past and present. The following images are the digital multimodal texts considered for analysis from the ‘22 images of Ramayana and Mahabharata’ by Scroll Droll.



To begin the exploration, the paper lays its initial focus on the definition of multimodal texts. Multimodal texts are those which have more than one mode like audio, visual, animation along

with written language that are interconnected. Multimodal texts are usually digital and can also be available as print or graphic text. The above-mentioned digital texts spoon out the vital essence of reading a text for academical purpose. According to BBC Bitesize studies, a text should inform, should inspire, should persuade, should argue/analyse, should advise or should make us utilise the content to think, reason and become creative. In short it has to communicate, comprehend and create its impact. Each graphical text mentioned above serve the same purpose and it is simple, easily available, less expensive, suitable to attract every category of learners and very minute compared to the traditional voluminous texts. Thus, digital multimodal images can serve as a facile learning aid because it is simple and compact. The images speak about Ramayana, a mythical epic story of the Indian subcontinent and the images convey what the characters of the fiction would do in the present digital world to face the same situation.

According to Bronislaw Malinowski, there are two ways to deal with the mythical knowledge. Either we have to retain the existing knowledge by rewriting, reconstructing, deconstructing, decoding or expanding it with suitable changes and logical explanations or we have to discard it and allow it to decay in the racks by forgetting it completely. Since Myth continues to live in Indian context in the form of religion, ritual, tradition, custom or a practice it is impossible to discard it completely. So, myth is often revisited with different motto and in the present context the attempts are to expand the original myth by using the present problem-solving skills of the digital era in order to invoke humour as well as to demystify myth.

The first image 'Vishnuji's Gallery' speaks about the Dashavatara Myth. It is generally believed that Lord Vishnu takes birth to destroy evil and restore peace on earth and nine such incarnations are over and people are expecting the tenth avatar i.e., Kalki avatar. The digital text uses the modern method of storing information in the form of files which is more efficient and easily accessible. The second image 'Eye specialist for Dritharastra' identifies the breaking of gender stereotype without disturbing the human emotion. Gandhari, in original Mahabharata tied a cloth around her eyes to express her immense love on her husband whereas Gandhari in the image searches for a specialist through a digital portal restricted only for doctor's assistance to get back his eyesight. It not only speaks about the liberation of modern women but also about the productiveness of women education to the society. Similarly 'NalNeel' need not wait for some divine grace to construct the bridge to reach Lanka; Sita need not feel helpless for not knowing how to kill the time when kidnapped; Hanuman need not carry the precious ring that symbolically represented Rama's identity with extra care amidst the other stress; Vibhishana need not wait to know the next move after leaving Lanka and wait anxiously for a long time to know Rama's response; Surpanaka could have thought about other ways of handling her nose damage apart from complaining her brother and causing unnecessary ego clashes; Enemies could estimate powerful Kumbakarna's stand by looking at his WhatsApp last seen status and prepare themselves for defence and People through forums like 'Change Organisation' could have voiced out their opinion about the selection of their leader.

The images have retained the original story but have expanded the myth to make it suitable to the present context. Though the paper gives out only one interpretation of every image that strikes to a viewer on immediate basis, it can correspond to multiple interpretations through application of various theories. The images demand to know the original myth in order to enjoy the humour in it which promotes extensive reading. The attempts to place the incidents in the recent context paves way for demystification because the story and situations are dealt as common incidents of life and are not perceived as a holy task of divine intentions. It also boasts

about the efficiency of digital era in handling the issues with just a finger tip touch on the social media forums. It can attract students of any age group because of its pictorial impact and can also be perceived by illiterates. Students of lower standard can use it to understand the original myth; students of high school can compare and correlate the old and new perspectives; students of college level can work on theories of reconstruction, deconstruction in mythical studies and students at research level can think about such creative methods that can make students work more to strengthen their potential rather than teacher spoon feeding the knowledge as per the existing pattern.

Multimodal texts are apt learning aids for today's scenario because they are facile, less expensive, create permanent impact on learners and also are adaptable for any discipline depending upon the context because it is multi-dimensional open knowledge. The research unwraps how multimodal texts can be productive in revisiting myth and expanding the critical thinking. It can also be used to convince the audience on a slower pace to eradicate superstition and extract crude knowledge from the complex myth that can be useful for existing generation. The paper in total gives a call to look at alternative learning aids to make formal education interesting and worthy to fit into the competition of the digitalised world where the worth of a teacher is brought down to a mere facilitator.

## GLOSSORY

- **Digitalisation:** the conversion of text, pictures, or sound into a digital form that can be processed by a computer.
- **Social Account:** a network account created to maintain personal and business relationships on social media.
- **Reconstruct:** an impression, model, or re-enactment of a past event formed from the available evidence.
- **Deconstruct:** a method of critical analysis of philosophical and literary language which emphasizes the internal workings of language and conceptual systems, the relational quality of meaning, and the assumptions implicit in forms of expression
- **Decode:** convert (a coded message) into intelligible language.
- **Gender stereotype:** a set of societal norms dictating what types of behaviors are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for a person based on their actual or perceived sex.
- **Demystification:** to rid of mystery or obscurity; clarify.

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