Efficacy of Social Media in Disaster Mitigation with Special Reference to Kerala Floods 2018

Mr. Christo Ninan[1], Dr. Sudharsan. S[1]

Abstract

The research attempts to explicate the utility of innovation, social media during disaster mitigation. To explain it in a clear-cut view, the researcher attempts to elucidate the pivotal role placed by social media in disaster mitigation in Kerala Floods. For the study, the researcher has used a quantitative method with 190 samples collected via Google Forms. The sampling technique used for the study is the convenient sampling technique. The challenges faced by social media due to fake news in imparting its aid in its fullness, the new techniques which are utilized in disaster mitigation, and the correlation of social media and social work fall under the purview of the study for its detailed and constructive analysis. This study found out that social media has been extensively utilized by people regardless of their age or context to both receive and provide help to people in their distress. It has also revealed that the connectedness which was made into its almost complete effect through social media, helped and played a vital role in keeping the mental equilibrium of the people affected by the disaster. Along with this, this study also proposes suggestions regarding more constructive and fruitful use of social media, one of which is to utilize these media for rehabilitation and awareness along with rescuing them at the time of distress.

Keywords: *Disaster, Disaster Management, Social Media, Efficacy.*

1. Introduction

Right from the genesis of human beings, he presented himself as a social animal.

---

[1] **Mr. Christo Ninan, Dr. Sudharsan. S,** Department of Social Work, Madras Christian College, Affiliated to University of Madras.

The word Society traces its etymology from the Latin word Socius, which means Companionship. Human beings through developing their societal structure, also develop a collective consciousness, which is a cradle of shared or common knowledge within a society. Thus, a society not only shares its land and resources among people but also shares the intellectual arena among them. The concepts of society prioritize the value of companionship and interdependence within a group of people.

This companionship has manifested itself in a variety of forms over the ages. Man has never been the lone survivor of this world, but has received and contributed to the survival of the entire flora and fauna. In the beginning, this companionship was characterized by physical presence and work done by fellow beings within society. In an Agrarian society, the contribution was in the form of manual labor. And this had undergone a considerable and significant change by the advent of technology, boosted by the new developments and its new inventions. The togetherness of the past enabled them to survive difficult times, including natural calamities and disasters. Technology was the later addition to the life of human beings. But even before that man lived in coalition and interdependence. Technology and its inventions played a huge role in both transforming and developing former modes of communication and companionship.

2. Review of Literature

Communication forms the rubric of any society. Effective and enhanced communication and communicative mediums transforms a society into a more effective and productive entity. It forms and transforms social structures and relationships. Communication and technological development have gone hand in hand in the entire history, and the emergence of mobile and internet services have propelled communication to an exceptionally high level (Harankhedkar, 2011). Technology and advancements in technology plays a crucial role in the development and evolution of communicative mediums. Such a revolutionary innovation is the Social Media platforms of the present ages. Social Media are collaborating online mediated innovative methods that allow the creation or propagation of information, views, career interests, and other forms of expression via the virtual world. The diversity of separate and built-in social media services presently available provide challenges of definition; somehow, there are some common features (Jan H. Kietzmann, Kristopher Hermkens, Ian P. McCarthy, 2011). As social media and its enhanced tools made communication and transference of

information very easy, it is used and employed effectively in different arenas of social life and organizations. The observations that "Social media also transcended the limitations of geography and made available innumerable and equal opportunities for everyone irrespective of their living situations. Therefore, according to Lenhart et al., (2010), about 57% of online network users are 18-29 years old and have a profile on various social media websites. In a study that undertook by Pempek, Yermolayeva, and Calvert (2009), the amount of time spent daily on social network sites varied greatly. This new habit of social media has penetrated itself very deeply into the societal life of modern people. The approach of web-based media is changing how individuals associate with one another also, the way wherein data is shared and disseminated" are interesting observations that need to be qualified as there are numerous reports that social media may spread fake news and are 'vulnerable to manipulation and misrepresentations.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To study, the efficacy of social media in disaster mitigation with special reference to Kerala floods 2018
- To explore the scope of media in Kerala floods 2018
- To understand the innovative methods used in social media for the rescue and mitigating
- To find the effect of fake news in creating panic
- To examine the challenges faced in accessing social media during Kerala floods 2018
- To understand the psychosocial wellness in community togetherness

4. Research Methodology

The research method used for this is Quantitative Method. In this research design, the general technique used to investigate the characters of the social media when used in disaster mitigation by analyzing the responses through the collection of opinions from the respondents, interpretation, analysis, and discussion of data. The field of study was among the people affected/worked during the Kerala floods in 2018 where they used social media platforms for disaster mitigation, awareness, etc. The criteria of the respondents are they have to be either affected, involved in rescue, or both. The

research design used for this study was the descriptive design. In this particular study, the researcher also defines the involvement of media in various phases such as recovery, preparedness, etc.

The universe is the people who worked in the disaster mitigation in the Kerala flood with the help of any mode of social media without prior knowledge about how to handle the situation of the management before it happened. The universe of the study is comparably vast and the respondents were chosen according to their availability and willingness to participate. For the sampling, the researcher used, convenient sampling. In this research, the researcher adopted the plan to collect research data from a conveniently available pool of respondents who were readily approachable to be a part of the sample. The tool used in this research is Google forms. In this the respondents have to fill the Google forms according to their choice. The response collected by the researcher through the google forms are properly managed, arranged and updated to get the genuiness of the data and removed all the issues like multiple entries, fake entries etc. And it was also collected in spreadsheets for the future reference and clarifications.

5. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Data analysis is a process used to transform the obtained data in the form of tables and figures. The interpretation should be in a way to solve the research problem. The researcher has analyzed the collected data using different statistical tools. Analyzed data were presented in the form of tables and figures. The analysis was done with the help of SPSS version 25.
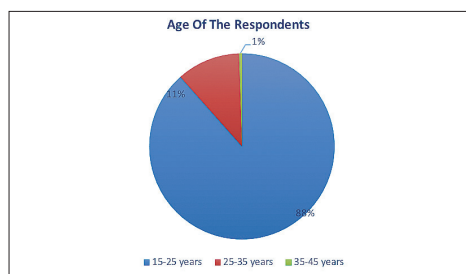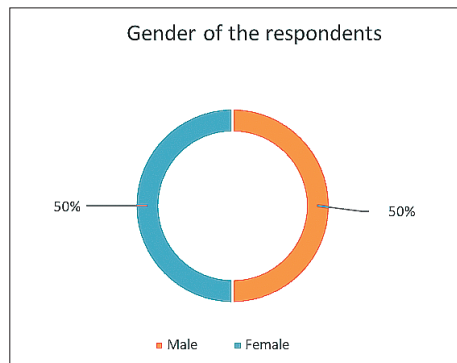
5.1 Age of the Respondents

Figure 1: Age of the Respondents

The Figure 1 shows the Age of the respondents, high majority belong to the age groups between 15-25 years that is a high majority as compared to the other age groups (Figure 1). Both the other mentioned age groups are in a considerable proportion (11%) are from 25-35 years and 35-45 years (1%).
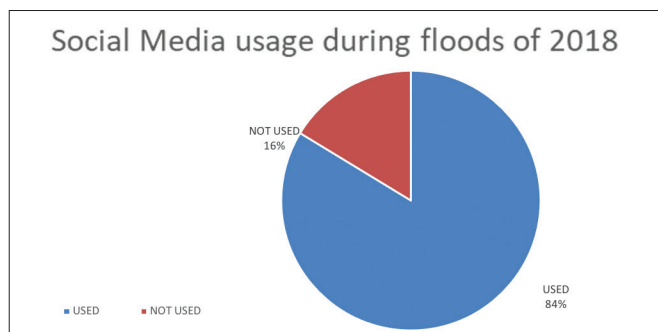
5.2 Gender of the Respondents

Figure 2: Gender of the Respondents

The Figure 2 shows the distribution of respondents based on gender. The analysis revealed that half of the respondents are in the Male category and the other half is from the Female category.
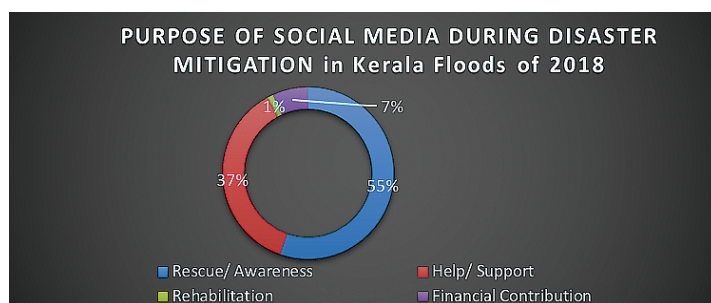
5.3 Social Media Usage During Kerala Floods of 2018

Figure 3: Social Media Usage During Kerala Floods of 2018

The figure 3, shows the distribution of respondents based on whether they used their social media accounts during the Kerala Floods 2018 to help others. The analysis revealed that a vast majority of the respondents have used their social media accounts during the Kerala Floods 2018 to help others and a considerable proportion of respondents did not use their social media accounts during the flood.

5.4 Purpose of Social Media During Disaster Mitigation in Kerala Floods of 2018

Figure 4: Purpose of Social Media during Disaster Mitigation in Kerala Floods of 2018
The figure 4 shows the distribution of respondents based on their opinion on the purpose of social media during disaster mitigation in Kerala Floods of 2018. The analysis revealed that less than two-thirds of the respondents think that the purpose of social media is rescue/awareness and more than one-third think that the purpose is help/support while a considerable proportion thinks that the purpose of social media is rehabilitation and financial contribution.

5.5 Helpfulness of Social Media During Kerala Floods of 2018
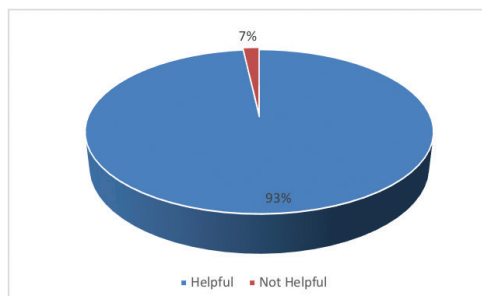
Figure 5: Helpfulness of Social Media During Kerala Floods of 2018

The Figure 5 shows that revealed that the absolute majority of respondents agreed that social media was helpful and a considerable proportion of the respondents said it was not helpful during the Kerala floods of 2018.
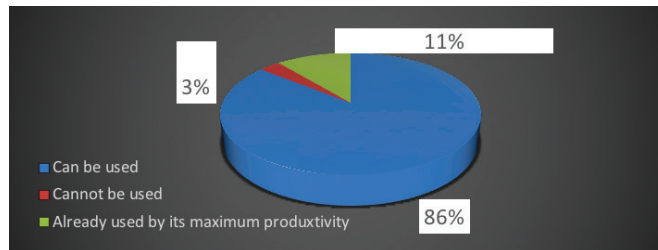
5.6 Effective Usage for Maximum Productivity

Figure 6: Effective Usage for Maximum Productivity

The figure 6 was analyzed to know whether social media was used in its maximum productivity during the Kerala floods of 2018, a high majority of respondents suggested that social media can be used more productively, a considerable number of respondents suggested that social media cannot be used more productively, a considerable number of respondents suggested that social media was already being used at its maximum productivity.

6. Discussions of Main Findings

6.1 Demographics

The respondents who participated in the study can be divided into two categories according to their gender — Male and Female. The respondents who participated in this research consist of 50% of male and 50% of female. And the age of the respondents was categorized into 4 categories in this study that is 15-25 years, 26-35 years, 36-45 years and 46-55 years and most of the participants are from the first category that is from 15-25 years. According to United Nations, the people who belong to age 15-24 are categorized as youth. And this study shows that the involvement of youth in disaster mitigation during Kerala floods was inevitable.

Respondents are mainly characterized and included in the research based on some

features such as they should be either affected, involved in rescue, or both. It is found that a total of 82.6% of the total respondents were participants to the rescue process of the Kerala floods of 2018 online. Out of which a considerable proportion of 16.3% was affected and involved in rescue at the same time. A study conducted by the University of British Columbia's Sauder School of Business in 2013 found that people wish to 'like' a cause than opting for acting upon the cause. Similarly, the studies also revealed that, people are more inclined to provide online and financial support, if needed, over their physical and personal help (Riley, 2013)

6.2 The Scope of Social Media in Kerala Floods 2018

In all the respondents, it is found that 83.7% of the total respondents have effectively used social media accounts during the Kerala floods of 2018 for disaster mitigation including for awareness, rescue, sharing information, etc. As per the studies held on the role of social media and the impact of social media during the floods by Rekha Rani and Yadukrishnan, (Rekha Rani Varghese, Yadukrishnan T A, 2019) exposed the fact that at an average rate people spend more than 3 hours in social media during the time of the flood. It also provides the fact that they depended on social media for information regarding their beloved ones.

The mental health perspective in disaster mitigation is one of the key factorsthat has to be checked but it's very pathetic that after the due analysis it is found that social media has been effectively used by, a total of 92.1% of total respondents for help and rescue. On the contrary, it is also revealed from the study that these social media platforms have not been utilized (only 1.1%) for rehabilitation, where rehab is considered to be a major duty of social work. According to Suresh Bada Math, Maria Christine Nirmala, Sydney, and Naveen, they talked about the mental health perspective in Disaster Management. The mental health perspective principle has made a change in the overall view from relief-centered post-disaster management to holistic development, multi-dimensional combined public method of health promotion, disaster prevention, readiness, and mitigation. But the rehabilitation program in the post-disaster situation was not done at its maximum effectiveness.

Studies undertook on the challenges or issues that might reduce the effective use of social media lead to some of the findings which include network issue, power failure, etc. It is also revealed that a total of 25.8% of total respondents were vulnerable due to either the lack of awareness and knowledge or lack of gadgets. So, it's a crucial drawback when

taking into consideration the technological advancement and developments that we claim to have on these pages. According to the study by Harankhedkar about the impact of technology on communication, communication and technological development have gone hand in hand in the entire history, and the emergence of mobile and internet services have propelled communication to an exceptionally high level (Harankhedkar, 2011) but in this present world, we have to rectify that the involvement and accessibility of technology have not reached to all the phases of the society.

6.3 The Innovative Methods used in Social Media for the Rescue and Mitigating

Social media being an innovative addition to the disaster mitigation process worldwide this study has also substantiated and found that 61.6% of the total respondents consider or think of social media as a tool that can be used in disaster mitigation. This was not a recent discovery though; it has been effectively used in the past in the field of disaster mitigation. Thus, this study also emphasizes the effective utilization of social media during desperate and tiring times. Studies regarding the innovative methods and utilization of social media lead to the finding that 58.9% of the total respondents were using social media groups for other helping programs apart from the Kerala flood 2018. This data effectively demonstrates the in-depth utility of social media irrespective of the situation, that is whether it is an emergency or a normal day. The Nepal earthquake, Odisha cyclone of 2013 also proves that social media has something to do with the disaster and before Kerala floods itself people started using social media as a tool.

Social media, in the beginning, was criticized severally for altering the lifestyle and dimensions of human life. Kaplan and Haenlein in 2010, explained how the propagation of data made quickly through social media, the revolutionary brainchild of technology, has made the transportation and propagation of information easy and quick. This ability of social media had a very huge impact on the people affected by disaster, to be specific 96.3% of total respondents of this study found that the information and warnings received through social media as helpful.

Even when networking, technologies provide highly developed technological assistance with the prospect of helping people in disaster, such as location technology, mark safe option, Google maps, and various other web portals to seek help. It is found that the majority of the respondents were either unaware or lacked the knowledge of its effectiveness.

According to Junco et al (2010), "social media is a collection or amalgamation of internet websites, services, and practices that support collaboration, community building, participation and sharing". Even though these types of technologies are available around us and it is known that social media through its technological advancement provides innumerable scope and possibility, people are either ignorant or unaware of them. This study also substantiates such a sad state among the society. It is found that 24.7% of the total population was either disinterested or unaware to provide awareness during the Kerala floods of 2018, while 61.1% found it difficult to donate via social media. Along with this, it is also found that 89.5% and 70.5% of the total respondents are unaware and thereby not using social media for review meetings and networking, respectively. The reasons of which have to be dealt with seriously.

Even though in the previous experience about the usage of social media in effective disaster mitigation like 2013 Odisha cyclone, it is also found that respondents of this study consider and suggest the efficient utilization of social media in the future. While 11.1% of total respondents think that it has been utilized to its maximum productivity a vast majority that is 85.8% of them believe that it can be used further. To note that a considerable proportion that is 3.2% consider that it cannot be used anymore.

6.4 The Effect of Fake News in Creating a Panic

The accumulation of too much information regarding the same event led to the emergence of fake news and manipulated information regarding the same. This is one of the major challenges faced by online social media platforms and that they are vulnerable to manipulation and misrepresentations. This also proposes social media as a great threat to the safety and composure of a society.

The application and development of electronic wave has found extensive use in creating and transferring documents in the entire globe (Burg, 2013) When the propagation and transferring of data across the world becomes easier, one of the threats born along with that is the propagation of fake news through the social media. Apart from the numerous challenges faced by social media, fake news emerges as a crucial threat to social media and its smooth conduct in society. This has effectively been reflected in the times of disaster, it is found that 88.9% of the total respondents of this study have responded affirmatively to the fact that, fake news had a huge impact on disaster mitigation.

In the study that was meant to delineate the means through which fake news propagates in society, it is found that 83.7% of the total respondents opine that fake news is spread through social media, while 42.1% consider it to be the aftermath of rumors that propagated. Social media along with its wide spectrum of possibilities and advancements, it has been curtailed from its utilization to its maximum productivity due to the propagation of fake news. Through this study, it is found that a total of 76.4% of the total respondents believe that fake news has reduced the efficiency, effectiveness, and credibility of social media.

Even when the contributors are in the high majority, they are made to leave due to the propagation of fake news and its effect. Fake news mainly manipulates the truth and thereby reduces the effectiveness of the aid. Through this study, it is found that a total of 75.8% of the total respondents think that fake news manipulates the aid which is provided during a disaster.

Another important finding from the perspective of disaster management is that disaster mitigation is made either impossible or hard by the involvement of fake news. Fake news or false information could increase the panic among the people who are already disrupted by a disaster. A total of 93.1% of the respondents supports this argument. It not only makes mitigation a harder process but at the same time it also reduces the morale of both the affected and the people who work hard in the field for rescue.

6.5 Challenges Faced in Accessing Social Media During Kerala Floods 2018

The number of people using social media is increasing from day to day at an alarming rate. The increasing number of participants and aspirants in social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter helps the news reach as many people as possible. The reach and influence that social media has, in this modern world, marks it as the most reliable and effective medium in propagating news and information. This opportunity has been effectively utilized by many organizations in extending their helping hands to the needful in society. Further, technology has improved storage and retrieval of communication when the essentiality arises, primarily verbal communication whose storage modeled real challenges in pre-technology times (Harankhedkar, 2011). This ability of social media, to record and form the archives of memories also makes it important and crucial in the field of communication.

Challenges faced by the social media during the Kerala Floods 2018, 51.1% of the

total respondents consider rumors as the main challenge faced by the social media. While another 58.9%, 65.3%, and 65.8% consider Unclear data, Network issues, and Power failures as the difficulties faced by social media in its mitigation process during Kerala Floods 2018. Respondents have also provided their response on whether such challenges affected the efficiency of disaster mitigation. It is found that 84.7% of the total respondents believe and consider that the above-mentioned challenges had adversely affected the efficiency of disaster mitigation during Kerala Floods 2018. About the Kerala Floods of 2018, it is found that a total of 76.3% of the total respondents, either agree or strongly agree to the fact that inadequate resources reduced the scope and accessibility of social media.

The application and development of electronic wave has found extensive use in creating and transferring documents in the entire globe (Burg, 2013). So likewise, technology has influenced the communicative aspects of society. If we are to examine the major developments that marked the revolutionary change in communication, it is the development of social media platforms. Social media was initially utilized for friendly communication and entertainment. Later on, it transformed itself to become the carrier of information to all parts of the world within no time. So, it is also found that the general attitude towards social media as something that can be only used for entertainment also affected the effective use of social media in disaster mitigation during Kerala Floods 2018. This finding was acknowledged affirmatively by a total of 75.2% of the total respondents. They either agreed or strongly agreed to the fact that the general attitude of the people towards social media was a hindrance in the effective action via social media.

A study in the U.S shows that almost 80% of the people in almost all countries have an active Facebook account. This shows the seriousness of the issue at hand. There is an ever-growing influence of this virtual platform-induced passivity in human beings, who are expected to be active participants within a society. In one of the data evaluated, the researcher analyzed and found that a considerable number of respondents strongly agreed that the activities online makes people more passive, less than two-third of respondents agreed that the activities online makes people more passive, less than one-third of respondents disagreed that the activities through online make people more passive, a considerable number of respondents strongly disagreed that the activities through online make people more passive.

6.6 The Psychosocial Wellness in Community Togetherness

According to Suresh Bada Math, Maria Christine Nirmala, Sydneyand Naveen, they talked about the mental health perspective in Disaster Management. The occurrence of mental health problems in catastrophe affected population is two to three times more as compared with the general population. In one of the data, the respondents responded their view about the crisis and the ability to overcome and do daily activities, .the researcher analyzed and found that a considerable amount of the respondents strongly agreed that crisis never affected the ability to overcome and to do daily activities, less than two-third of the respondents agreed that crisis never affected the ability to overcome and to do daily activities, one-third of the respondents disagreed that crisis never affected the ability to overcome and to do daily activities, a considerable amount of the respondents strongly disagreed that crisis never affected the ability to overcome and to do daily activities.

In the same study mentioned above, the authors opine as epidemiological studies have documented that elevated rate of mental health disorders, such as anxiety disorders, posttraumatic stress disorder are very much common and a chance of occurring is very much also. In this table the researcher analyzed and found that a considerable amount of the respondents strongly agreed that an individual can manage his/her stress on their own in the crisis, one-third of the respondents agreed that an individual can manage his/her stress by their own in the crisis, half of the respondents disagreed that an individual can manage his/her stress by their own in the crisis, a considerable amount of the respondents strongly disagreed that an individual can manage his/her stress by their own in the crisis. The researcher also studied response about a change of level of stress after and before the crisis, and found that less than one-fourth of respondents strongly agreed that there was a change in the level of stress before and after the crisis, three fourth of respondents agreed that there was a change on the level of stress before and after the crisis, a considerable number of respondents disagreed that there was a change on the level of stress before and after the crisis.

In this research, the researcher discussed the involvement of social media or being connected can reduce issues such as fear, and sleeplessness. The data was analyzed and found that less than half of respondents strongly agreed to the fact that involvement of emotional support can reduce the effect of sleeplessness, anxiety, fear, etc., less than half of respondents agreed to the fact that involvement of emotional support

can reduce the effect of sleeplessness, anxiety, fear, etc., a considerable number of respondents disagreed to the fact that involvement of emotional support can reduce the effect of sleeplessness, anxiety, fear, etc., a considerable number of respondents strongly disagreed to the fact that involvement of emotional support can reduce the effect of sleeplessness, anxiety, fear, etc.

As per one of the studies conducted by the Space and Naval Warfare System Center Atlantic (2013), the innovation of social media in Emergency management is very much noted in the last decades. Through the use of web-based social media, members of the community who observes events can provide public care organizations with appropriate, geographic-based data. This data can be used by decision-makers in preparation response plans, organizing resources on the ground, and, in turn, inform efficient and precise data to the community. Less than two-third of the respondents strongly agreed that the effectiveness of collective working through online media can increase the efficiency of mitigation, half of the respondents agreed that the effectiveness of collective working through online media can increase the efficiency of mitigation, a considerable amount of the respondents disagreed that effectiveness of collective working through online media can increase the efficiency of mitigation, a considerable amount of the respondents strongly disagreed that effectiveness of collective working through online media can increase the efficiency of mitigation

Social media can deliver public safety organizations better capabilities to, engage in ongoing collaborative communications with community members and better prepare them for emergencies and also gather, analyse, and act on actual emergency information provided straight by social media users within the public. This helps the individuals to shape a positive association within the individuals and community thus develop a feeling of togetherness and oneness

In this research, the researcher analyzed and found that less than half of respondents strongly agreed that Kerala floods stood as a reason in building positive relationship among the people, less than two-third of respondents agreed that Kerala floods stood as a reason in building positive relationship among the people, a considerable amount of respondents disagreed that Kerala floods stood as a reason in building positive relationship among the people, a considerable amount of respondents strongly disagreed that Kerala floods stood as a reason in building positive relationship among the people.

7. Suggestions & Conclusions

7.1 For Government

Even though most of the people in society are using at least one of the social media platforms, they are unaware of its utility when it comes to emergencies like disasters and calamities. So governmental organizations and the disaster management sector, Government of India could conduct programs and awareness drives to make people aware of the effective and constructive use of social media during such tiring times.

One of the best ways to reduce the overcrowding and propagation of fake news is by providing proper clarification and details to the concerned authority and thereby ensuring the reduction of propagation of unclarified or vague data. Indian Government authorities, organizations and respective institutions like NIDM can ensure this by making them easier to access and making them available for the people during emergency calamitous situations like a disaster or natural calamity.

Another major concern regarding the efficiency of disaster mitigation is the lack of availability of qualified gadgets and resources. Indian Governmental organizations and institutions could provide the people in the vulnerable areas with quality resources and measures to ensure the efficient conduct of disaster mitigation.

Most of the time disaster mitigation and management efforts end up in vain mainly because of the inadequate resources that are provided among the people and with the people who wish to help. A similar challenge is also faced by online media and specifically social media. Resources such as Gadgets, Power Connection, and Data availability are to be made more accessible and acquirable to the common people with the help of Governmental organization's or NGO's. Such a state of adequate resources and measures will improve the efficiency of the effort that is invested by the people within a society to help others during disasters.

It proves costly when it comes to disaster mitigation during disasters like Kerala Floods 2018. Misinformation could divert the resources and thereby increase the vulnerability and destruction of the disaster. Therefore, the Information Technology Department of India and the concerned departments could ensure and execute plans to monitor and censor the propagation of such fake news through social media. Since social media has in-depth roots in society, it has greater effects on the people.

7.2 For Social Workers

Social media has been utilized in multiple ways during pre-disaster and post-disaster situations. It is analyzed from the studies that the opportunities that are provided by the social media platforms are less utilized in the field of Rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is one of the significant processes by which people are retrieved back to their normal state of affairs from suddenly disrupted emergencies.

One of the key factors social workers have to keep in mind is that, as we are living in a world of digital resilience the involvement of different media in our day-to-day life has an impact on every phase of life. The usage of social media for awareness, help is common but the social workers have to make the stages for review meetings and resource networking. The connecting of resources from the donor to the receiver should be and could be done properly with the help of social media.

As is already mentioned, fake news proposes a great threat to the effectiveness of the utilization of social media in all kinds of disaster mitigation. Social workers and social work departments in institutions could increase their area of work towards making people aware of the danger of fake news and the existence of fake news in social media

Another help that social workers can provide concerning social media is that they can inform and make the public aware of the positive impact social media has on modern society. Since social media has developed into a whole new level and as it has a huge impact on the day-to-day life of the people in the society, social workers, as caretakers of the society, could empower the people with the new knowledge and skillsets about the positive use and thereby positive impact of these social media platforms.

Social media has its roots running very deep in modern society. Every person acquires or gets hold of majority of their needs through online platforms. So as social workers who wish to extend their hands to help the people in the society, they should now join their hands both on online and offline platforms to impart a holistic impact of the work rendered to the society. Social workers can start to interact and converse with people via online and social media platforms especially during times of disasters where staying connected to the outer world could prove significant in the face of isolation.

Another threat faced by the developing social media sector and its effectiveness is the propagation and existing misconceptions within the minds of the people. General attitudes or misconceptions about using social media could diminish the social being in human beings and it increases passivity etc. This could be effectively reduced through

the intervention of social workers. Social workers could ensure that people are aware of the usefulness of social media regardless of the limits of the physical structures. They can conduct seminars and activity drives that demonstrate the constructive utilization of such social media platforms and online platforms in general.

Along with this notion of social workers, it is also worth noting that they play a vital role in keeping a safe and healthy mental atmosphere among the people of the society. Their conversation with the people and their support in the face of havoc and pain prove very helpful and make people capable of overcoming the difficult situations they are in. So social workers could also extend their domain of influence and service into the mental spheres of the people.

Another important help that can be effectively implemented in the society by the social workers is that they can ensure collective activity within a society. Social workers could ensure that activities are performed, especially during times of disasters, collectively. This has to be emphasized by the social workers because it can increase and help in developing the level of integrity and togetherness among the people within a society. This also has to be done on both online and offline platforms whereby it can have a significant contribution in helping people to cope up with the changing atmospheres.

8. Conclusion

The concept of being connected has undergone a considerable change along with the means that kept people connected. The emotional and psychological benefit of being connected has also undergone a considerable change. Similarly, another aspect that characterizes human beings is their ability to adapt and overcome the struggles they face in their life. These struggles might be natural and some might be artificial.

Physical and virtual worlds came into existence and people joined their hands both online and offline to efficiently carry out disaster mitigation. One such event was the Great Floods that happened in Kerala during the year 2018. It affected the land and its people very badly, resulting in the casualty of numerous people. People were taken by surprise by this disaster. So they were clueless as to what is to be done to save themselves and others. This is where social media emerged with its opportunities to connect them with the entire world and thereby making them feel that they are not

alone and that numerous hands and hearts werecoming up with help. This study which attempts to understand the efficacy of social media in disaster mitigation has found out that people have utilized the opportunities provided by social media to keep them virtually connected with the world and also to avail help. People all around the place have utilized social media for rescue and support, social media platforms were widely and effectively utilized for providing instructions and warnings and also for directing the resources in the right path and to the right place. Several challenges were faced during the proper functioning of social media in such a situation.

This study also led to the revelation as to how deep the roots of social media have penetrated our society. This also demonstrates another evolution of human society that attempts to blend the physical and the virtual world. Thus, social media emerges as a crucial element in effective social work as well. Social workers, who attempt and toil to bring in a constructive change along with providing a healthy and wealthy living atmosphere in the society, should able to utilize this medium for effective interaction with society. Taking this into account, social workers could interact with all groups within society through social media. Thereby impart an effective and constructive influence on society. The mental atmosphere and the attitude of people towards social media and their perspectives on helping people can be constructively transformed by the efforts of social workers.

Reference

1. Abhimanyu Shankhdhar, JIMS / Social media and business.
2. About disaster management. (n.d.). Retrieved from International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ALeKk03jS3PGsOU-S8MOLOsQ43lLrhe3nA%3A1615784998699&ei=JuxOYJ-YKvnA3LUPqoO24AY&q=ifrc&oq=ifrc&gs_
3. Burg, N. (2013). How Technology has Changed Workplace Communication, http://www.forbes.com/sites/unify/2013/12/10/how-technology-has-changed-workplace-communication/
4. Carr, C. (2019, October 04). The data behind the average article lifespan. Retrieved March 18, 2021, from https://blog.parse.ly/post/1768/data-on-article-lifespans/
5. Carter, n. (2008). Disaster management, a disaster manager's handbook [pdf]. Philippians: Asian development bank.
6. Dave, D. R. (n.d.). Role of Media in Disaster Management. Retrieved from Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur, Odisha: https://www.osou.ac.in/Search.php?cx=000358487220416256137%3Aklgukv03bxe&cof=FORID%3A9&ie=UTF-8&q=role+of+media+in+disaster+dr+r+k+dave&srchbtn=GO
7. Dhanashree Giri, Aman Vats. (2017). Social Media and Disaster Management in India: Scope and Limitations. Emirates International Research Conference (pp. 349-356). Dubai, UAE: Springer, Cham.
8. DimiterVelev and PlamenaZlateva. (2012). Use of Social Media in Natural Disaster Management. ICITE, (p. Volume 39). Hong Kong.
9. Disaster noun - DEFINITION, PICTURES, pronunciation and usage notes: Oxford ADVANCED American dictionary at oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com. (n.d.). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/disaster
10. Disaster. (2021). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disaster

11. DOLLARHIDE, M. E. (2020, September 6). Social Media Definition. Retrieved from Investopedia: https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-media.asp#:~:text=Social%20media%20is%20computer%2Dbased,quick%20electronic%20communication%20of%20content.

12. Framework & Guidelines of using Social Media. (n.d.). Retrieved from Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India: https://www.meity.gov.in/writereaddata/files/Approved%20Social%20Media%20Framework%20and%20Guidelines%20_2_.pdf

13. Harankhedkar, H. (2011). Impact of Technology on Communication, http://www.buzzle.com/articles/impact-of-technology-on-communication.html

14. Jan H. Kietzmann, Kristopher Hermkens, Ian P. McCarthy, (2011). Social Media? Get Serious! Understanding the Functional Building Blocks of Social Media. Business Horizons, pp.241-251.

15. Libretexts. (2020, December 16). 1.2F: Durkheim and social integration. Retrieved March 18, 2021, from https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Sociology/Book%3A_Sociology_(Boundless)/01%3A_Sociology/1.02%3A_The_History_of_Sociology/1.2F%3A_Durkheim_and_Social_Integration#:~:text=Society%20is%20a%20social%20product,social%20beings%2C%20not%20just%20animals

16. M.D., S. J. (2014, September 11). The Role of Social Media in Disaster Psychiatry. Retrieved from Psychology Today: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-aftermath-trauma/201409/the-role-social-media-in-disaster-psychiatry

17. Mahmoudi Sidi Ahmed et al., "Detection of Abnormal Motions in Multimedia", Chania ICMI-MIAUCE'08 workshop, Crete, Greece, 2008.

18. Reporter, S. (2020). Role of media in disaster management highlighted. KALABURAGI: THE HINDU.

19. Rekha Rani Varghese, Yadukrishnan T A. (2019). Role of social media during Kerala floods 2018. DigitalCommons@ University of Nebraska - Lincol

20. Riley, A. (2013, November 08). Slacktivism: 'liking' on Facebook may mean less giving. Retrieved March 18, 2021, from https://news.ubc.ca/2013/11/08/slacktivism-liking-on-facebook-may-mean-less-giving/

21. Role of social media in Natural Disasters. (n.d.). Retrieved from Aniruddha's Academy of Disaster Management: https://www.aniruddhasadm.com/index.php/component/k2/item/305-role-of-social-media-in-natural-disasters

22. S. Willium, "Network Security and Communication", IEEE Transaction, Vol.31, Issue.4, pp.123-141, 2012.

23. Saleem, V. (2015, June 07). How people turn to social media during natural disasters. Retrieved from Down To Earth: https://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/how-people-turn-to-social-media-during-natural-disasters-49587

24. Social work Action. (n.d.). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/

25. Society. (n.d.). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/society

26. Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Atlantic. (2013, September). Innovative Uses of Social Media in Emergency Management. Retrieved from Homeland Security Digital Library: https://www.hsdl.org/c

27. Suresh Bada Math, Maria Christine Nirmala, Sydney Moirangthem, and Naveen C. Kumar. (2015). Disaster Management: Mental Health Perspective. Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine, 261-271.

28. What is a disaster? (n.d.). Retrieved from IFRC: https://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-management/about-disasters/what-is-a-disaster/