



COVID-19 Vs. Social Media Crisis: An Evaluation

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Abstract: Social media are considered as a main channel and is a very crucial pillar of crisis management. Social media is a boon for the present society and social communication. Noteworthy, New Media has a deep penetration in the present time of the digital revolution. The significant part of social media is that its services have developed social efficiently and dominates the other media channels. There are a number of social media platforms which have become an important part of everyday life. In this paper, the researcher planned to explore the core relationship between the social media and crisis communication in the time of a pandemic such as COVID-19. Social media are undoubtedly acting as channel of effective communication in the present time of COVID-19 pandemic to control crisis situations. As far as the penetration of social media are concerned, the role of social media as tool of crisis manager is very decisive.

The present papers tried to analyze how social media provided a big space and shift the control understanding of media during pandemic for all the social organizations. The methodology used in this paper is mainly primary in nature.

Keywords: Social Media, Crisi Communication, Social Organizations, Digital Revolution

I. Introduction

Severe crises destroy societies and attract nation's attention. The crisis can be of many types of disease to disasters and terrorist attacks, in all such scenarios, social media provides a communication environment in which there is too much contradictory and often inaccurate information that can spread to people and groups both accidentally and intentionally. The World Health Organization (WHO) refers to this problem as corona crisis, i.e. (COVID-19), which got a severe momentum on all media platforms. There are rigorous flows of information's, some are true some are false, this situation of fabrication of news is also termed as "infodemics" as it is difficult to find reliable sources and guidelines that are reliable when you need them. In particular, the covid-19 epidemic highlighted the need to develop a comprehensive communication strategy for social media to improve support and crisis situations. Misinformation, intimidation or trivialization of a crisis event can spur the authorities on everyone because they develop a crisis communication strategy. In recent years, tensions have risen between the official "command and control" and decision-making for the crisis management of self-organized information and communication systems. Until the last decade, officially built and monitored

information systems produced much of the data needed to make critical decisions during the crisis. These control systems are still in place for critical decision-making by crisis management agencies, but we are now seeing a huge amount of information being generated on Social media platforms. This is fueling an era of informal collective decision-making between self-organizing systems and organizations, communities and individuals. The social media is an evergreen tool of information and news dissemination. The present era and the present digital generations very much depend on the social media for all kinds of infotainment. In this respect, after December 2019, the COVID crisis has given a new face to Social media and present its new kind of Role among the social capitals. The use of the internet and social media has strong influences the people's behavior by providing health information and social media networks.

Social Media is an important source of information today; twitter is able to provide real-time content analysis to detect public health authorities in order to quickly meet people's demands. During the covid-19 pandemic, social media provided instant information about the disease for real-time exchange between humans. The ever-changing social media has become an important

communication platform during the crisis. Public health authorities and individuals are increasingly using Social media platforms to communicate and share information about public health emergencies. The platforms of popular social media such as Twitter, TikTok, YouTube and Facebook have helped in educating people about the necessary measures in order to avoid errors during the pandemic of COVID-19, but their mission remains questionable. The Social Media platform can be used to overcome psychological positions in a mass quarantine. However, social media should be used for smarter reasons, as it provides the opportunity to identify actions and tips to prevent misinformation and panic.

Social Media and Pandemic Crisis

The epidemic usually threatens the health of many people and requires immediate action to stop the infection at community level. Research has shown that fear and anger solve the correlation between access to social media, the recognition of personal risks, and protective behavior. Some researchers have suggested that these feelings influence the connection between risk detection and mass media. In addition, the fear is mainly reflected in social media with the importance of negative emotions during the covid-19 pandemic. When inaccurate or false information is shared with the public, they tend to panic and react to such false information in many ways, including buying panic and experimenting with excessive or even harmful drug treatment

The urgent demand to alleviate the panic on social media has become a priority. When the epidemic began, the public was interested in finding the right online resources and information for their own protection needs. The researchers also found that the public interest in infections and pandemics on social media has been linked to current events and global events, and they continue to pay attention to the importance of the disease. Several studies have shown that random mass media trauma can exacerbate the initial symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). During the eruption of COVID-19, false and misleading news about the covid-19 raid on social media and a false panic have fueled many cybercitizens, which can lead to confusion and complicate citizens' mental well-being.

Misinformation, Social Media and its Consequences

Misinformation causes confusion and panic. Misinformation became a major social media Problem during the covid-19 pandemic. Facebook has a new update that warns users if they have misinformation. Some studies have reported that verified Twitter accounts and health accounts had the least unverified information compared to others. Some tweets or features on Twitter accounts have been found to transmit false and non-controversial information. Some researchers have shown that "Humor-a phenomenon in which users are associated with the conversation, ridiculous conspiracy theories inadvertently draw more attention to it, posing as a threat to misinformation. Since misinformation is constantly being disseminated on Social media sites awareness raising and appropriate preventive measures for public safety are extremely important. Misinformation on Facebook about possible drugs such as hydroxyl-chloroquine for the treatment of COVID-19 inspired many people to buy such drugs without the consent of their doctor, resulting in inadequate care of these drugs for patients who needed them. Be careful when using these forums to prevent the spread of false information and rumors. It is important to provide fast and accurate information about critical infection control problems.

II. Literature Review

The study, based on the H1N1 pandemic during the 2009 global pandemic, followed by the prevalence of misinformation, the social media were used as a toll of dissemination of misinformation against "swine flu". The peoples are using the social media and getting information full of anxiety and social differences. Many studies on social media and information collection and dissemination on diseases and research based on antibiotics and self claimed doctors are really dangerous as it leads to the misconception on fatal diseases. Similarly, in the present scenario of COVID-19, some media have claimed that the coronavirus and most dangerous disease of the world because it has fuelled the entire globe with misinformation, causing terror and apprehensions among people, such expression pointed out that social media platforms use to express the messages with feelings and thoughts based on wrong source of information, which ultimately gives wrong

image of medical facility and health. ABC News (2020) reported in a survey that, In the age of social media, the panic of COVID is moving faster than the virus itself, which is creating a very negative situation among the social capitals. On the other side of the coin, it is also one of the fact that social media is very effective in disseminating information related to health issues. BBC News, believes that listening to a large amount of information and news from COVID-19 affects the audience and caused panic, causing people to live in fear.

Rothschild and Fischer (2020), social media causes fear and panic among social media users. Discussing social media, scholars also noted that people rely on social media to get information and facts about COVID-19, because some countries use filters, which is why social media provides information, but not everything.

When COVID-19 appeared and was delivered from outside other countries in mainland China, people turned to social media for more information about the virus. According to Molla (2020), there have been millions of cases related to COVID – 19 floating on social media platforms with a variety of information and facts, but facts are changing and represented as per the needs and fashion. The media were invited to take responsibility for providing appropriate information and raising public awareness. Frenkel (2019) reported that some social media companies had tried to remove the false information from their platforms when claiming that COVID-19 social media companies were fueling misinformation around the world.

Victor (2020) argues that in today's digital age, Chinese citizens can not get enough facts about COVID-19, which is why they need social media and often shared information, photos and videos inaccurately. In addition, the Government of India has asked major social media companies such as Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Shrechat and Twitter

to stop publishing false information because it causes panic among people. Emmott also pointed out that according to the European Union document, Russian media published a "major false campaign" about the COVID-19 epidemic to create panic among Western citizens.

III. Objective of the study

1. To analyze the role of social media platform as a tool of crisis management.
2. To understand the roles of social media as an effective tool of communication during pandemic.

IV. Research Methodology

In this study, we used a quantitative research method to obtain data from Indian social media users. The questionnaire was prepared in English and was shared by about 70 social media users. The respondents were mainly from university professional i.e. teaching faculty of age group 30-45 years. Out of 70, only 46 proved to be suitable and suitable for research. Descriptive content analysis was used to analyze the data. The analysis was performed in an excel format. Social media users participated in a random online survey to find out how social media have caused panic about the COVID-19 epidemic, as well as the impact of social media on mental health and the health crisis in countries around the world.

V. Data Analysis & Interpretation

The present study mainly deals with the role of social media and its role in pandemic. In this study, the researchers have taken a sample of 46 respondents to understand the value of social media and its role as crisis manager and a tool of effective communication.

As indicated in the table 1.1, the 51% respondents are male and 49% females.

Participants	Number
Male	26
Female	20
Total	46

Table 1.1:Ratio of respondents

In the table 1.2, the respondents were asked to answer for, "Which social media platform do you use to get news and information about COVID-19?"

The respondents very clearly indicated that the Facebook has a deep penetration among the society at 28% of Facebook users uses it for the information and getting news on the social and current affairs.

Social media	Percentage
Facebook	28
Twitter	22
Tiktok	32
Youtube	18
Total	100

Table 1.2: Popularity of social media as a news provider

In the table 1.3, the respondents were asked to answer for, “Which social media platform normally used for the dissemination of fabricated misinformations. The respondents stated the Facebook followed by YouTube has a deep reachability for the dissemination of wrong news or misinformation.

Social media	Percentage
Facebook	66
Twitter	5
Tiktok	2
Youtube	27
Total	100

Table 1.3: Popularity of social media for misinformation provided

In the table 1.4, the respondents were asked to answer for, Do the social media affect the psychology of Participants. The respondents stated the Facebook followed by tiktok has a deep impact on the mental frame of respondents.

Social media	Percentage
Facebook	38
Twitter	7
Tiktok	34
Youtube	21
Total	100

Table 1.4: Social media and Psychological impact

In the table 1.5, the respondents were asked to answer for, Categories of information shared on social media. The respondents clearly stated that the social media are certainly creating impacts as message to give a notion of fear and insecurity among users as the message in the form of video, pictures and comments which has no authentic value with no fact points. These certainly provide a sense of protection as the level social media penetration is very high and is also considered as a very effective communication tool but the information is not at all based on facts. Therefore, it creates a wrong image and sense of misinformation among users.

Social media	Percentage
Fear based	26
Rumors based	21
False claims	29
Social awareness	24
Total	100

Table 1.5: Categories of information shared on social media

In the table 1.4, the respondents were asked to answer for, Do the social media act as a tool of crisis management. The respondents replied in favor of Facebook i.e. 66 percent, followed by YouTube i.e. 18 per cent. The social media is everywhere and therefore the information on social media disseminate very fast to every section of the society. Respondents were very positive with the fact the social media is an effective tool of crisis management.

Social media	Percentage
Facebook	66
Twitter	9
Tiktok	7
Youtube	18
Total	100

Table 1.6: Social media as a tool of crisis management

VI. Discussion and Conclusion

As per the data, the results of the study claimed that, Social media has a deep impact on the people's behavior and information dissemination during COVID crisis. It can also be noted that the social media has a psychological impact too, especially for the present social media users as it gives a new collection of information from different sources and peoples or social media users are accepting it without verifying the facts and sources. Normally people are not able to distinguish the information as it is good or bad. The social media have a deep penetration in the present society and if the information is wrong or fabricated or misleading, certainly it will lead to a miss management among the social capitals. Information is a backbone of social development and if the information is wrong, developmental process will move in wrong directions with a sense of panic and rumors. One could say that the panic caused by widespread information about the cities of COVID-19 is worse than the number of cases of COVID-19 and has a lasting effect. Lastly, the present study can be concluded as social media is certainly a potential media tool which is very significant in the development of society, but similar, social media is potentially dangerous as it is supporting the misinformation to be spread in the society. These misleading messages consist of another sub-epidemic that is capable of endangering public safety, which in turn exacerbates crisis management. It is a false rumor that COVID-19 is spreading faster than the virus, and it seems that people are actively fighting two facial viruses, and it is simultaneously associated with misinformation. The key approach proposed in this review was also to correct misunderstandings among health professionals. Although the present study also pointed out that the right information may have failed during the Covid crisis. Therefore, the objective of the study has been justified in the research. The researcher also recommends that there is a severe need to develop

methods to correct misconceptions about health through social media, which requires timely expert advice, regular public health awareness, and a corrective program for regular communication usually with people and media algorithm.

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