

ABSTRACT

The use of social media to support the disaster management cycle (DMC) and the stages of preparedness, response and recovery is increasing. Organizations including the American Red Cross (ARC) have developed strategies to engage users on social media platforms such as Face book, Twitter and Instagram. In March 2012, ARC launched a digital volunteer program to engage in a social conversation with users during disaster operations.

Although social media can positively impact disaster relief efforts, it does not provide an inherent coordination capability for easily coordinating and sharing information, resources, and plans among disparate relief organizations. Nevertheless, crowd sourcing applications based on social media applications such as Twitter offer a powerful capability for collecting information from disaster scenes and visualizing data for relief decision making.

Children are the future generation who can use all these information technology to develop applications in the field of disaster management

In this research project we assess the knowledge and attitudes of school children and the use of social media platforms in disaster scenarios with special emphasis on geological data and crowd sourcing to get an idea of Sri Lankan standpoint in this context, as no such researches have previously been done.

Social media cannot and should not supersede current approaches to disaster management communication or replace existing infrastructure, but if managed strategically, they can be used to bolster current systems. Now is the time to begin deploying these innovative technologies while developing meaningful metrics of their effectiveness and of the accuracy and usefulness of the information they provide. Social media might well enhance systems of communication, thereby substantially increasing the ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disastrous events that threaten people and infrastructure. Given the increasing frequency and the extent of varying levels of disasters that occur now in the world, which affect our daily lives, it is imperative for everyone to have disaster management knowledge, awareness and preparedness among the individuals of any institution, regardless of age. It is even more critical for school students. They are expected to go to the society and deal with all these disasters and find solutions' in mitigation and response as the responsible

citizens of the future. Social media will be a great platform for these students in achieving the above if harnessed properly and responsibly without any glibness.