

**INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA  
PLATFORMS IN DISASTER RISK COMMUNICATION  
IN SRI LANKA**

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this is my own work, and this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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## **Abstract**

Disaster Risk Communication (DRC) is one of the key elements adopted by the global community to reduce the adverse effects of catastrophic disasters. Several drawbacks were identified that caused the ineffectiveness of the DRC in Sri Lanka. One of the significant downsides is the deficiency in proper communication channels for the impactful propagation of disaster-related information. Social media plays a crucial role in developed countries, with previous studies proving its beneficial impact on global disasters.

Previous scholars have recognised the possibility of enhancing the efficiency of the DRC in Sri Lanka by utilizing social media. However, there is a lack of proper investigation done based on the exploration of adapting and enhancing social media practice toward the DRC in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the main objective of this study was to identify the existing gaps and barriers by investigating the prevailing use of social media for DRC in Sri Lanka.

Through a comprehensive literature investigation, several aspects of using social media during disasters as a communication channel were identified. Consequently, a conceptual framework was developed for utilising social media for Disaster Risk Communication in Sri Lanka. The subsequent section of the study analysed the use of social media in DRC in Sri Lanka based on the critical parameters of that framework. Different data collection methods, such as online questionnaires, telephone surveys, and social media surveys, were used to obtain the required data for the analysis. Besides, various analytical techniques were used to conduct the analysis.

Several conclusions were drawn from the analysis results, which provide numerous suggestions for bridging the gaps and barriers identified from the analysis. The outcomes of this study will help in enhancing social media usage for Disaster Risk Communication in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** Disasters, Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Risk Management, Disaster Risk Communication, Social Media