



Review

A Review on Current Trends and Applications of Social Media Research in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: Standard research on social media and its applications has been widely disseminated in developed nations. But in Sri Lanka, research in this area has been released far less frequently. However, social media usage in the country is evolving regardless of age, sex, education level, or other limitations. This study aims to fill the gap by conducting a comprehensive review of social media-based research conducted in Sri Lanka between 2012 and 2022. A systematic search of reputable databases, including IEEE Xplore, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, Google Scholar, and Springer Link, identified 57 relevant papers for analysis. The review highlights the diversity of application areas where social media research has been employed in Sri Lanka, including disaster management, public health, marketing, education, and more. Additionally, the analysis highlights the methodological approaches employed in social media analytics and the specific social media platforms utilized by researchers in Sri Lanka. The results of the current study serve as a timely resource, enabling policymakers and decision-makers to identify the potential avenues of social media research in Sri Lanka. By understanding the existing trends and implications, stakeholders can harness the power of social media data to make informed policy decisions, develop effective marketing strategies, enhance public health initiatives, and revolutionize educational practices.

Keywords: social media, social media analytics, social media applications, literature review, Sri Lanka

1. Introduction

Sri Lanka, a developing country with a population of approximately 21 million, is experiencing a rapid expansion of social media's influence on its society. Noteworthy incidents, such as the spread of rumors on social media leading to panic buying during the COVID-19 epidemic and the dissemination of misinformation triggering ethnic conflict, highlight the importance of understanding social media usage patterns in the current information age. While innovative researchers and business experts worldwide have been exploring new approaches for gathering, combining, and analyzing vast amounts of social media data [1-2], it remains unclear if similar studies have been conducted in the Sri Lankan setting. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by offering a comprehensive review of social media research conducted in Sri Lanka, providing unique insights on the most popular sectors in which social media research has been conducted, prevalent data analytic techniques utilized in such studies, and social media platforms that have generated the most discussion among the research community. This pioneering attempt represents an initial comprehensive analysis centered on the investigation of social media usage and applications in Sri Lanka. By offering