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The coronavirus pandemic turned our daily lives upside down, and everyone is adjusting a new normal. Social media has played a significant role in mediating the communication of information about COVID-19, although coverage of social media is more often than not negative. The power of social media platforms to provide granular personalised and interactive information streams has also changed the relationship between citizens as consumers and contributors to the news, allowing for the increased participatory consumption of news. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided an unfortunate demonstration of this, as legitimate news has frequently circulated on social media a long time before the news became apparent on traditional media streams. For example, our preliminary research shows that the spread of the virus across Italy became apparent significantly earlier, on social media, than in the mainstream media. Social media has also played a major role in celebrating the ‘caring and sharing’ of communities across the world. Many individuals and charities reached out to the elderly and vulnerable through hashtag campaigns, offering to help with food, medicine and grocery shopping. Facebook has developed a new feature where volunteers can reach out to people in need.

However, social media platforms are increasingly playing a part in controlling the dissemination of fake news. Alongside developing partnerships with misinformation watchdogs, Facebook has introduced measures in ranking and controlling user news feeds using sophisticated algorithms. WhatsApp has introduced ‘forwarding limits’ to restrict distribution and propagation of misinformation to wider publics. YouTube has also published strict guidelines on sensitive COVID-19 related content. The platform is not only encouraging development of content related to positive social practices, such as #stayhome and #cookwithme, but they are also managing hoax, medical misinformation.

The community networks that social platforms host go much deeper than the technology. They have enabled a shift in the way we communicate with each other: to be faster; more seamless; and with greater reach than anything that has come before. Platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp enable rapid proliferation of filtered news, advice, task requests and real-world support that a centralised organisation is not capable of on this scale. This is how local communities have been able to respond so effectively and rapidly when reports of lockdowns, travel restrictions and, ultimately, death tolls were shared during the early stages of the pandemic. Although authorities enabled people to “snitch” on their neighbours to enforce safety measures, it’s the establishment of social norms at a local level during abnormal times that helps people know how to act when advice is conflicting and rapidly changing – although there is a responsibility to ensure mis-information does not endanger lives.

Using Facebook for group coordination is not without its problems and the misuse of user data resulted in many users leaving the platform. But when the dust settles from the COVID-19 crisis there must be a conversation as to the role of social network platforms in modern life, in particular during times of worldwide crisis. To establish trust in the systems used for communication social network platforms should be open and transparent, especially if it is being used in preference to centralised control of information. Facilitating community resilience through social media platforms with lightweight applications may be part of a broader collective intelligence approach to future disruptive events on a similar scale to COVID-19.

Other than this there are many facebook groups who is collectiong funds in order to help the people with basic necessity starting from food, mask, sanitizers etc. As social media is a huge platform where connecting people is very easy and as people are spending most of their time in home. So in this platform it becomes very easy to get access to people, information spreads faster and problem gets solve with more effective solution in a less time. Social media is playing a huge role to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. There are various groups like blood bank, plasma bank etc where people in need of blood and plasma are posting, people are sharing the post and within few moments thousands of people are getting access to the post and people are coming ahead to donate the plasma to those patients in need. In absence of social media this process would be very time consuming and a long process to find the solution of this. Due to various features of social media things became very much handy and people are more eager to help as this process is hasslefree.