

IMPACT OF RACISM ON US ELECTIONS 2020

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ABSTRACT

Race and ethnicity have always played a role in politics around the world, in the same order they influencing the politics in a diverse and multicultural country like USA comes as no surprise. In the light of recent events triggered by the death of **George Floyd**, it surely does seem like it is going to have its effect on the upcoming US Elections 2020.

In this project we intend to gain an overview of the general public behind these events, its influence on their political stand and through all this try to predict the result of the US elections 2020. What better option than social media for this ? Therefore, we shall use social media sites such as twitter and reddit to collect the required data. We intend to perform a lexicon based sentiment analysis over the data and try to predict the outcome of the elections.

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1 INTRODUCTION

A few months back **#blacklivesmatter** was trending on twitter following the death of George Floyd, allegedly due to police brutality. We observed a lot of these tweets had Donald trump's twitter account or name mentioned in them. Donald Trump, the current president of United States is considered to be a racist due to his immigration policies, the infamous trump 'wall' and many of his racist statements.

With the impending US elections, Joe Biden being the other candidate contesting for the position (we expected him to get a lot of black votes considering his relationship with the previous president Barack Obama), we decided it would be interesting to see how racism would impact it.

Now that the elections are done and Joe Biden has been the newly elected president, we try to analyze the data collected during the past two weeks to investigate how it correlates with the outcome of the elections.

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2 OBJECTIVES

An article[1] "**Racism has long shaped US presidential elections. Here's how it might play out in 2020**" on "The Conversation" talks about the 2020 US elections and lists out reasons why trump could lose the elections. According to the article, the proximity of elections to the BLM(black live matter) movement, Biden's relationship with Obama and possibility of electing Kamala Harris as the first African American woman vice president would largely impact the elections. But how true are these statements?

Using the collected data we try to corroborate the reasons mentioned in the article that might have impacted the elections. Therefore, this research of ours tries to answer the following questions:

1. As the title of this paper suggests the main objective of the research is to investigate the impact the racism (inclusive but not confined only to the BLM movement) had on the outcome of the recently concluded US elections.

2. How conclusive is the sentiment of people on social media towards the presidential candidates, when it comes to the elections?

3. Did Joe Biden actually win the elections or did he win because Donald Trump lost?

3 METHODOLOGY

The idea is to filter-out the irrelevant data from the collected data using keywords related to Elections, Racism, Donald Trump, Joe Biden, Kamala Harris. This is called the first-data and this reduced data-set can be used to answer our second and third questions.

The first-data is filtered down further into two more data-sets:

- trump data-set: this data-set consists of data related to Donald Trump, Republicans and racism.
- biden data-set: this data-set consists of data related to Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, Democrats and racism.

We shall analyze the sentiment of people on social-media towards these two data-sets. This is done by assigning a polarity score to each tweet/comment in the data-set using libraries such as TextBlob. Using the overall polarity score of the two data-sets we conclude whether the comments/tweets on social-media truly reflect the sentiment of the people and therefore the outcome of the US Elections 2020.

4 DATA POSSIBILITIES

As of now we have around 500K tweets from twitter and 200k comments from reddit that are somewhat related to the topic of our research.

This data-set is sufficient enough to draw conclusions but as mentioned in the project 1 report, when it comes to large social media networks like Twitter and Reddit, it is always better to have a

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large and extensive data-set to support the outcome of our research
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- [1] Racism 2020. *Racism has long shaped US presidential elections. Here's how it might play out in 2020.* Retrieved October 29, 2020 from <https://theconversation.com/racism-has-long-shaped-us-presidential-elections-heres-how-it-might-play-out-in-2020-147556>