The role of Twitter in the Local Election of Nepal (2079 B.S / 2022 A.D.)

UFCFJJ-15-M - Social Media And Web Science – Student Number: 21065142

Credit: Nepal24Hours.com

Credit: Toronto Star Newspaper

Introduction & Research

The local level election of Nepal was held on 13th May, 2022 https://election.gov.np/.
Many political parties such as Nepali Congress, CPN-UML, CPN etc. have been known as the leading and well known political parties in the context of Nepal's politics (Hachhethu, 2006), and it is like a tradition that elections are typically won by the parties rather than the independent candidates. Independent candidates are generally assumed unimportant compared to any well known political parties (Kapoor and Magesan, 2018).

Research Question: Investigate sentiments directed towards political independent parties and can twitter be used to predict election outcomes and capture public reaction to the candidates?

Methodology

TAGS V6.1 was used to collect tweets over the period of a week. The term used to incorporate tweets was #NepalElection2079, #ElectionCommissionNepal, and #IndependentParty.

To understand how people tweets on the independent parties, I chose the name of Balen Shah as my search term, who is one of the independent candidate from Kathmandu Metropolitan city (**figure 1**). The total number of tweets collected was around 2k but later I deleted duplicate values and only used 999 tweets for analysing the people's responses. The Google sheets was used to categorise the theme.

I later realised that the data was biased only based on one candidate. Therefore, I collected new tweets again focusing on the candidates around the country by using the term #NepalElection2079 OR #ElectionCommissionNepal OR #IndependentParty. The total number of tweets collected was 2,294. However, I only used the relevant tweets for analysing the data. The data from the twitter were collected after the election but the results of the election was still unknown. I have tried to analyse how people are expressing their sentiments through emojis (**figure 2**), and what term they are using to express their sentiments towards the candidates (**figure 3**).

The data was also used to identify the most popular candidates in Twitter (**Figure 4**)
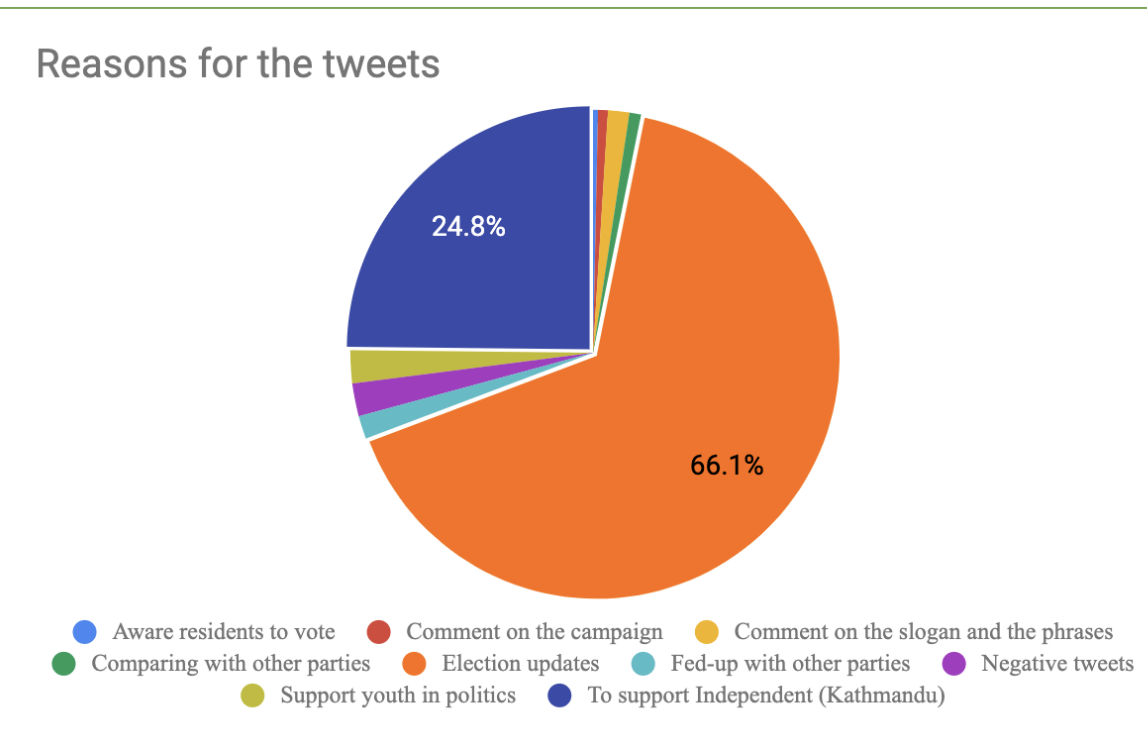
Findings

Figure 1: Reasons why people tweets on independent parties.
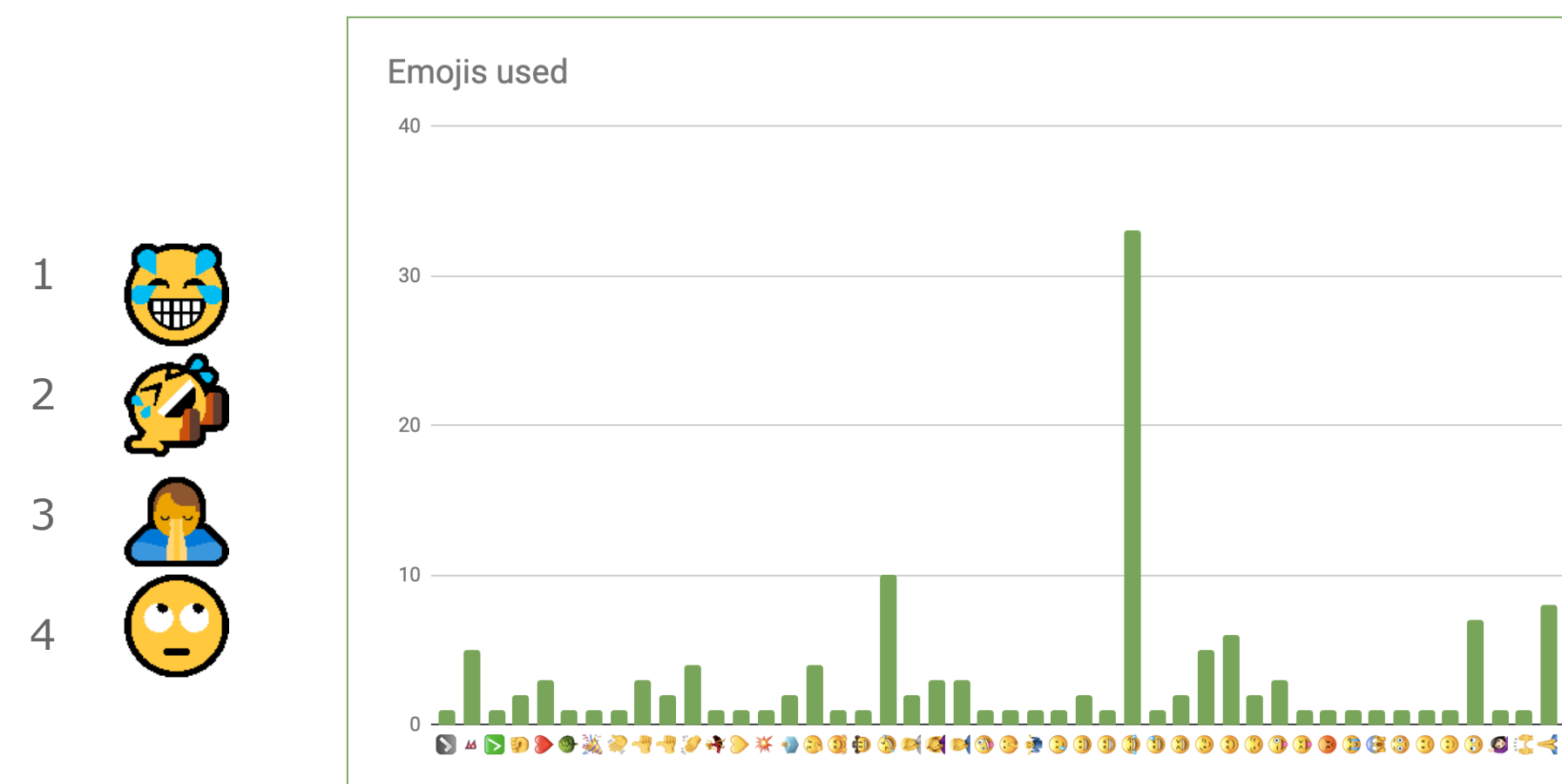

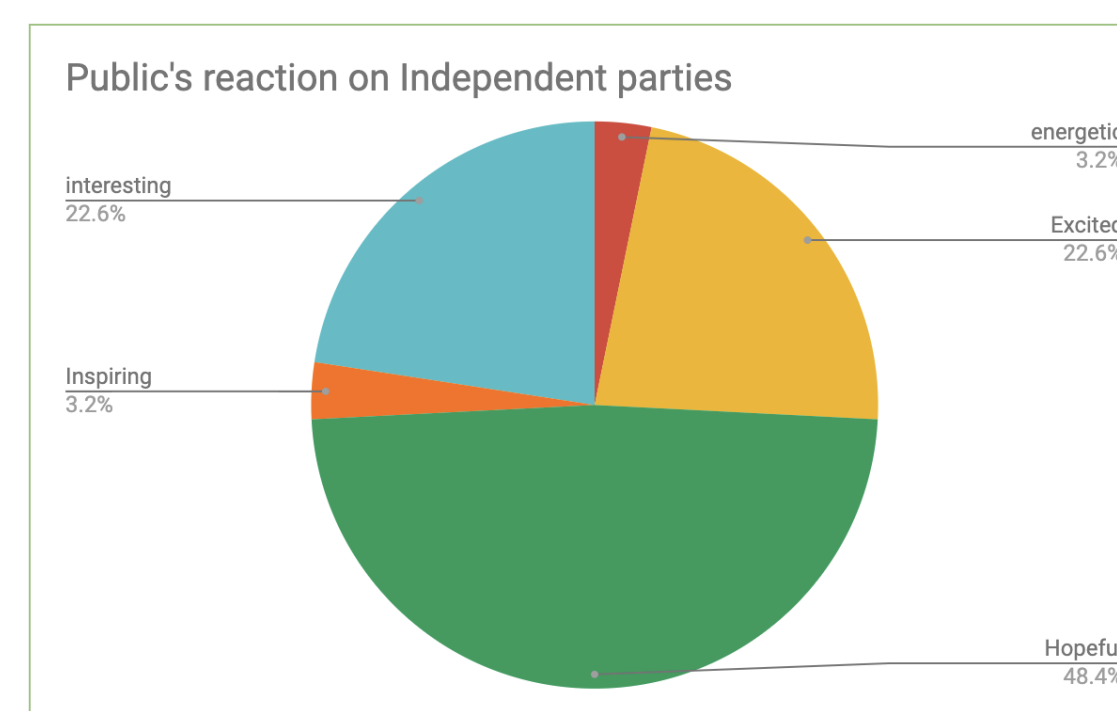Figure 2: Emojis used to express sentiments
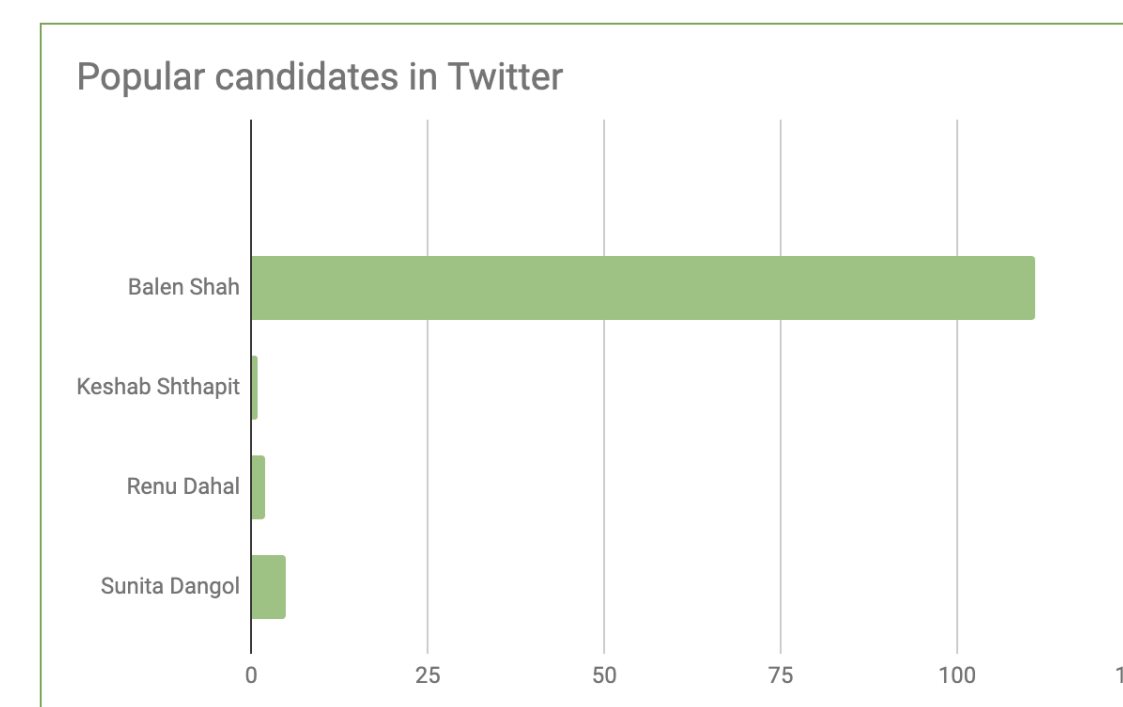

Figure 3: Sentiment words used

Figure 4: Polupar candidates in Twitter

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings from the research shows that majority of people tweets to share or ask information related to election. Besides this, the result shows that, people comments on independent parties to support them, to comment on their slogan and phrases, campaign, to support the youth in politics, to compare them with other political parties, or to express frustrations from the political parties, to aware residents to vote, or to leave a negative comments.

The most commonly used emoji is face with tears of joy, followed by rolling on the floor laughing, folded hands and rolling eyes
Similarly , figure 3 shows the positive reaction of public towards the independent candidacy. Majority of them are hopeful, while rest of them thinks it is interesting, inspiring, and they are excited and believe the independent candidates are energetic to bring change.

Figure 4, shows four most popular candidates among public in Twitter. Balen Shah is the most popular candidate among public in the twitter.

Limitations

The term used for gathering the tweets was biased in the first stage which consumed time and due the limited time for second research, only relevant data from 2,294 tweets was used for further analysis.

Since the data was collected after the election and before the results was published, most of the tweets collected was related to election results updates and the relevant information could not be gathered to understand how and why people tweets on the independent parties.

Filtering the duplicate or similar tweets may have made the results inaccurate.

References

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