

Analysis: How Twitter community reacted over Union Budget 2014

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VIDEO : JAITLEY PRESENTS DELHI BUDGET IN PARLIAMENT, FOCUS ON WATER, POWER



Gone are the days when social media platform such as Twitter was used by people as a means of chattering over soft stuffs like entertainment, sports and lifestyles as a part of leisure. Twitter verse was recently seen actively discussing about hard core issue like India's Budget 2014. Nearly 30,000 tweets related to this topic comprised serious debates. This reflects that social media has hit the mainstream.

Ohio Center of Excellence in Knowledge-enabled Computing (Kno .e.sis) at Wright State University used its Twitris system to gain insights into public perception and understand public's views on India Budget 2014, including the categories like Agriculture, Women, Defence, Tax and FDI.

[Kno.e.sis](#) has used its Twitris system for large number of significant events in the world, including natural disasters and humanitarian causes, political and social movements, and elections, as reported in over [15 major media](#) stories including Time.com, CNBC, the Atlantic and BBC News.

Highlights of the study:

The Twitris team used the Twitter API to collect over 30,000 tweets related to the Indian Budget 2014 between July 10, 2014 and July 14, 2014. The team analysed that the top two most tweeted about categories were 'agriculture' and 'tax'. A high volume of tweets related to agriculture comprised tweets largely conveying information. Only a little over 3% of these tweets expressed any emotion and were equally distributed between positive and negative emotions. This highlights a shift in social media users who are now accepting information like these the way they are instead of criticising them.

In the Tax category, almost 30% of the tweets in this category tweeted about the relief provided under personal tax.

The study found that not all discussion on Twitter was serious. A joke by someone, "Wish they had a tax on candy crush request on fb. Disappointed by the budget" as retweeted 283 times just in this partial dataset!

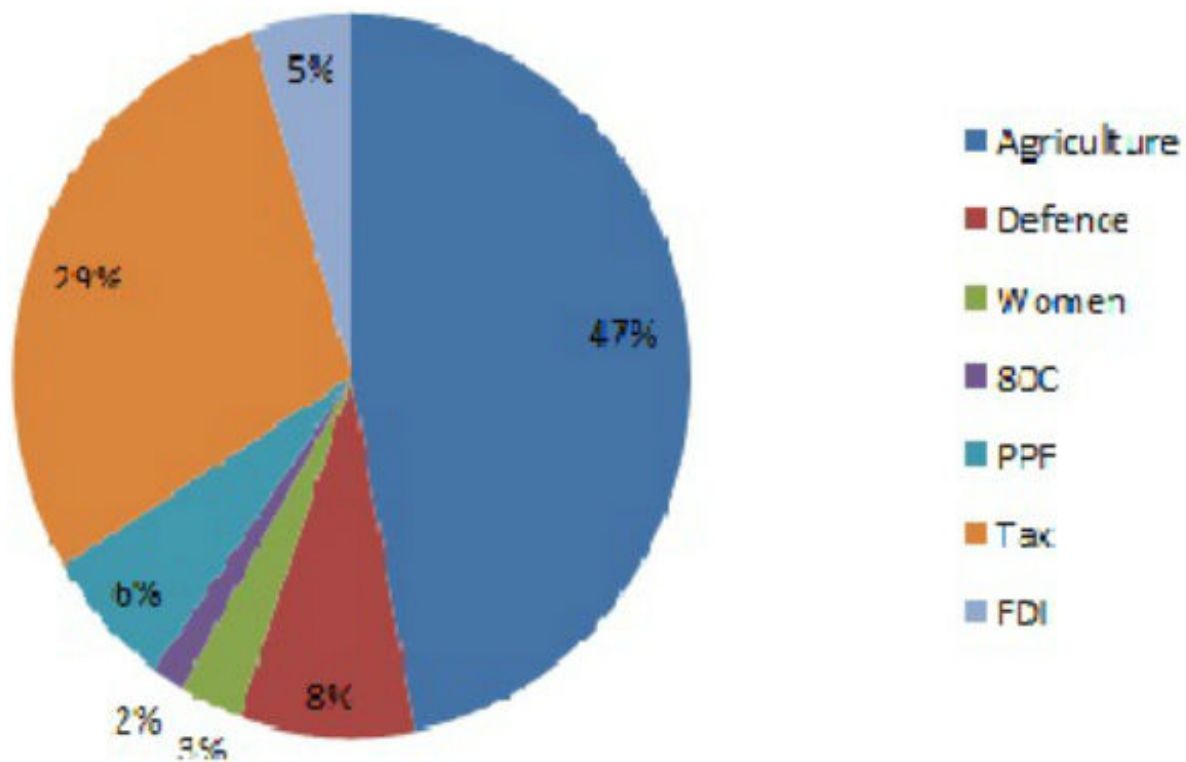
Twitris team used the Twitter API to collect over 30,000 tweets

Discounting for this joke the number of tweets with negative sentiments outpaced those with positive in the tax category. This does not necessarily mean people are negative about the tax policy when we consider tweet such as this that contributed to the negative sentiment (attributed by user @Vande_Mataram to the Finance Minister Jaitley): "My only regret abt this #Budget2014 is that I didnt have enough money to give more relief to small & mid-level tax payer".

Predictably, the tweets expressing positive sentiments primarily relate to the increase in the limit for personal tax.

Out of the total 21880 tweets on the concept of budget, the percentage of tweets expressing positive emotion were 2.55%. While those expressing negative emotion were 4.50 per cent.

At about 5% of traffic, the topic of FDI, primarily in defence sector, received notable attention. The negative sentiments edged out the positive sentiment here. 3% of tweets in this category expressed concern over foreign investment in the defence sector.



The increase of investment cap under 80C was received well as three times as many tweets reflected positive sentiment compared with those conveying negative emotions.

In the category of women's issues, the team found that Twitter users were largely unified in their disagreement of the budget allocated for women's security. In particular, its comparison with the Rs 200 crore allocated for Sardar Patel's statue received considerable negative support.

According to Professor [Amit Sheth](#), the executive director of Kno.e.sis who runs an extensive research program in

social media analysis, India is sure to see increasing use of social media analysis given that the leader of the new government, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his team, has demonstrated social media savvy that is unparalleled in the world, and the public is responding. The new dispensation is moving towards adopting the concept of Digital Democracy and is also interested in listening to people by monitoring social media as recent media stories suggest.

"We started use of social media in India since November 26, 2008, the day terrorists struck Mumbai and when most stories first broke on Twitter, not traditional media. That is also the day research leading to Twitris started. Now journalism cannot survive without social media, and people take social media as an integral strategy to organise and to talk back to the authority," said Professor Sheth.

Modi's success in social media:

With his remarkable social media presence BJP's prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi grabbed attention of the youth, which in particular came out in his support and ultimately voted him to power. Modi with his exemplary social media skills spread his messages and penetrated into the minds of voters who had access to this platform.

After becoming PM, Modi has urged his team to nurture their respective constituencies and make use of the media, especially the social media in reaching out to the common masses.

Penetration of social media:

In such a short span of time Indian social media has travelled a long way its penetration has grown manifold. The social media users have seasoned a lot who are not restricting themselves to just sharing their day to day activities and passing their times on web. Discussion on the social media like Twitter about serious issue like union budget shows its increasing importance and impact on our lives.

Here are the details of the study:

Top topics and percentage of tweets:

Personal Income Tax, relief in tax and measures to increase investment were the topics which received highest percentage of tweets followed by FDI in Defence, Kisan television, Beti bachao programme and the comparison between the funds allocated for Sardar Patel's statue and women's safety. Here are the segregation of tweets.

- Personal Income Tax: 8.80%
- IT relief: 8.78%
- Measures to increase investment: 8.78%
- FDI in Defence: 0.74%
- Kisan television: 0.70%
- Beti bachao: 0.40%
- Patel Statue and Rs 100 crore for girls: 0.23%

Above 10,000 tweets discussed about Agriculture:

- Count of Tweets: 10,493 (47.95%)
- Percentage of Tweets expressing positive emotion: 1.22%
- Percentage of Tweets expressing negative emotion: 1.84%

- Top Topics (with percentage of tweets)
- Jai Jawan Jai Kisan: 4%

Note: Under this concept, mostly informational tweets that lack any emotion or sentiment polarity were seen.

Above 1800 Tweets related to Defence:

- Count of Tweets: 1875 (8.5%)
- Percentage of Tweets expressing positive emotion: 0.74%
- Percentage of Tweets expressing negative emotion: 0.7%

Top topics (with percentage of Tweets) under this section were:

- Jai Jawan Jai Kisan: 27.2%
- Defence allocation: 4.01%

Above 1,000 Tweets on FDI:

- Count of Tweets: 1063 (4.8%)
- Percentage of Tweets expressing positive emotion: 3.85%
- Percentage of Tweets expressing negative emotion: 4.42%
- Percentage of Tweets related to FDI in defence was the top topic in this section.
- FDI in defence: 15.42%
- Country's safety in jeopardy: 3.57%
- India should welcome FDI: 2.53%

Tweeters were positive about relief given for tax saving under 80C:

- Count of Tweets: 348 (1.5%)
- Percentage of Tweets expressing positive emotion: 6.03%
- Percentage of Tweets expressing negative emotion: 1.72%
- Top Topics (with percentage of tweets) under this category were:
- 80C and PPF limit: 11.2%
- Tax saving limits in 80C: 9.48%
- Good for middle class payers: 5.45%

Displeasure over allocation of funds for women's safety:

However, the twitter community was particularly seen unhappy with allocation of Rs 150 crore for women's safety while Rs 200 crore sanctioned for Statue of Liberty.

- Count of Tweets: 667 (3%)
- Percentage of Tweets expressing positive emotion: 0.7%
- Percentage of Tweets expressing negative emotion: 18.74%
- Top Topics (with percentage of tweets)
- Giant sculpture for women's safety: 13.64%
- Beti bachao: 13.34%
- Education and women safety: 11.69%
- Women's safety and toilets: 4.04%
- Help for women facing domestic violence: 1.9%

Detailed data to support this analysis can be found [here](#). More questions are analyzed here at [Twitris India Budget 2014 Insight](#) page. Contact researchers Revathy Krishnamurthy along with her colleagues Jeremy Brunn and Alan Smith, and Prof. Amit Sheth the Executive Director of Kno.e.sis, at revathy@knoesis.org and amit@knoesis.org for more details on Twitris and this analysis.