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RESEARCH PAPER

Political Discourse and the Public Response on the 'Regime Change' in Pakistan (2022): A Thematic Analysis of Twitter Handles of the Leading Politicians

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ABSTRACT

During March and April of 2022 Pakistan saw yet another political upheaval when a sitting government was toppled with the help of a 'No-Confidence Motion' jointly initiated by almost all of the political parties in the opposition. Pakistan Democratic Movement claimed the success of NCM as the win of democracy while the then Prime Minister and Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Mr. Imran Khan argued that the motion was a result of conspiracy initiated by internal and external elements. Both the PDM and PTI took to the Twitter to spread their narratives regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan. The 'political discourse' was widely and vigorously discussed, supported, and criticized by the netizens around the country. This research endeavor is an attempt to explore and analyze the predominant themes within the political discourse produced through Twitter handles of the selected politicians. Secondly, to explore and analyze the predominant themes within the public response regarding the 'regime change' during April 10th to 14th, 2022. Keeping in view the research objectives the thematic analysis has been employed as a theoretical and methodological tool to explore and analyze the predominant themes within the 'political discourse' and 'public response' regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan. The findings show that the 'public response' reflected, supported and replicated the 'political discourse' of Mr. Imran Khan regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan during April 2022.

KEYWORDS	Imran Khan, No-Confidence Motion, Pakistan, PDM, PML-N, Political Discourse, PPP, PTI, Regime Change, Thematic Analysis

Introduction

Pakistan, a country which marked its 75th independence on 14 August 2022, gone through another internal regime change. There has been not a single time when a democratically elected Prime Minister has completed his five year term, they were either assassinated or their governments have been over thrown by dictators by imposing martial law. Now a new page in the books of history has been added, a vote of no confidence resulted in a regime change for the first time in Pakistan on April 10th, 2022. Despite claims of a foreign conspiracy made by the former Prime Minister Imran Khan, this very time the method used to overthrow the government was apparently legal. After Imran Khan's claims of hybrid regime and US conspiracy involved in the no confidence movement, Pakistan's economic condition is very poor and apart from that Pak-US relations are also going through a very fragile period. A serious political crisis struck Pakistan on April 10 and after that Imran Khan blamed the opposition for a US effort to unseat the Prime Minister (Tribune, 2022 July 3).

Very often, the elected government in Western democracies are overthrown and we have seen different regime changes but they were either by votes of no confidence or public protest, so a very less involvement of military can be seen. Certainly after the vote of no confidence in west, they appoint a new government but using a legal channel but in Pakistan

we can wonder and think that how and why Pakistan faced a regime change which apparently has caused damaged the economy and has worsened the internal political crisis which can lead Pakistan to a very unstable political state. Imran Khan's allegations of a US plot involving opposition politicians are debatable but along with raising gas and power prices, the current administration has kept dropping bombs of gasoline and diesel that has made life difficult for a common man. The lower and middle income groups will vanish entirely if nothing is done to address this (Khan, 2022).

According to an article in *Dawn* (2022, December 30) Because of the fact that democracy hasn't been allowed to operate freely, Pakistan has been dealing with periodic political, economic, and social problems for decades. This Regime change has defiantly affected Pakistan and the nation in a very negative way. This current system surely failed at every field may it be economy, governess or progress of the country and has made life very difficult for a common man. After this regime change in Pakistan, economy is ruined and 220 million people are thrown in the state of uncertainty.

Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM); the alliance of 15 political parties including Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan People's Party (PPP), and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUIF), claimed the success of NCM as the win of democracy in the country while the then Prime Minister and Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Mr. Imran Khan argued that the motion was a result of a conspiracy against his government initiated by internal and external elements. This 'political change' has been referred to as 'regime change' in this study as this is term widely employed in the media to refer to this political change. Both the PDM and PTI took to the social media especially Twitter to spread their narratives regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan. The 'political discourse' was widely and vigorously discussed, supported, and criticized by the netizens around the country. This research endeavor is an attempt to explore and analyze the predominant themes within the political discourse produced through Twitter handles of the selected politicians. Secondly, to explore and analyze the predominant themes within the public response regarding the 'regime change' during April 10th to 14th, 2022. Keeping in view the research objectives the thematic analysis has been employed as a theoretical and methodological tool to explore and analyze the predominant themes within the 'political discourse' and 'public response' on it regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan.

The main focus of the study is to explore and analyze the political discourse regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan (2022) produced by the selected politicians; the deposed Prime Minister Imran Khan, President PDM Maulana Faz-ur-Rehman and the subsequent elected Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on their respective twitter handles; @ImranKhanPTI, @MoulanaOfficial, and @CMShehbaz. Secondly, the public response to this political discourse that appeared in the form of replies, responses and comments has been analyzed. Both the key terms; political discourse and public response have been defined as follows;

Political Discourse and Public Response

Political speech has evolved and is now utilized to govern the public sphere as a result of the growth of a democratic system. According to Dunn (2021) political discourse occasionally appears to be an attempt at credibility-building through persuasion rather than expression of opinion. Actually, a politician's job is to further the interests of society as a whole. Political action thus appears to be a social activity guided by symbolic power structures with the objective of gaining and maintaining power.

In this study, by 'political discourse' we mean the Twitter posts shared by the selected politicians on their twitter handles during the time period under study regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan (2022) containing one or more key terms like; 'imported government', 'foreign conspiracy', 'no confidence motion/NCM', 'political situation' and

'opposition movement'. On the other hand, by 'public response' we mean the top ten public responses/comments/replies that appear under each selected twitter post shared by the twitter handles under study during the selected time period i.e. April 10th to 14th 2022.

Literature Review

Political leaders have long recognized how the use of public communication helps them maintain order. For example, Roman emperors emblazoned coins with their own visage and their important military victories. In more recent times, autocratic leaders have asserted control over mass media to solidify their power. Social media is increasingly becoming an important arena not just for political communication, but also for political conflict. From the extensive use of social media by Hamas and Israel in the 2012 Gaza Conflict (Zeitzoff, 2014) to internet censorship during Egyptian protests in 2011 (Hassanpour, 2013). By the end of 2014, over 76% of world leaders had an active Twitter or Facebook ac- count. Many of these online networks of leaders and their followers reflect offline, salient political cleavages.

When and why leaders adopt social media is an important and unanswered question. Social media provide world leaders with a new platform to broadcast messages, mobilize constituencies, and persuade citizens. Gatekeeping role of journalists diminished, increased competition for users' attention, and content can easily go viral. At the same time, social media usage is likely to constrain and influence the behavior of political actors. Social media reflects political behavior and how political institutions shape the strategic communication behavior of world leaders. We find little support for the hypotheses that social media adoption by leaders is higher in richer countries or that this process is driven by electoral pressure. However, there is strong evidence of a relationship between social unrest and leader response (Barberá & Zeitzoff, 2018).

Due to the ever-evolving tools and mechanisms of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, social media has quickly become the main space for political discussion and ultimately, political persuasion, to easily take place (Manning et al., 2017). Diehl et al. (2016) explore the social media platforms as a new medium through which political views can be disseminated on a wider scale and how the interactions between users on social media can create diverse networks which in turn exposes them to numerous diverse opinions which ultimately can persuade them to change their political viewpoints. The researchers claim that while only one third of social media users find the medium significant for political discussion, social media sites ultimately do serve as a 'catalyst' for people to express their political views among other beliefs. While they may not express it instantaneously, they can gradually feel comfortable in expressing their thoughts once they are in the right social circle that shares the same beliefs.

Joseph Kahne and Benjamin Bowyer (2018) explored the relationship existing between use of social media and political engagement by youth. Previously some scholars focused on particular technologies like phones or social media platforms, others made a comparison of effects of different social media platforms and some deduced information based on the frequency of platforms used. Ekstrom and Ostman (2015) shed light on types of online activity as being, gathering information, social interaction and creative production. The last type, creative production, directly effects political participation, both online and offline but the first two types deem indirect effects. Social interaction and creative production also lead to higher engagement in political discussion online and in turn, an increase in online and offline participation is observed. Kahne and Bowyer's work vehemently talks about political participation but lacks an insight on the implications of political misinformation spread online by supporters that can go to any extent just to support their leader of choice.

With the advent of social media, communication has transformed. Therefore new technology has also changed the way political conversations take place. The use of social media has complicated political engagement by creating new opportunities for the audience to play active roles in these conversations and thus creating a wide array of diverse actors involved (Vaccari et al., 2015). So, keeping in view the findings of the available literature it is pertinent to explore how the politicians in Pakistan have used Twitter as social media platform to spread their narratives regarding the 'regime change' and how have the public responded to this political discourse using their Twitter handles.

Material and Methods

Data Collection and Sampling

Considering the huge amount of data we have focused on the tweets during April 10th to 14th 2022 i.e. the initial five days after Imran Khan's government was removed. Keeping in view the space limits we limited our data to only five days and also because the analysis of the data would require a vast space. All the selected tweets along with their top ten replies/comments were arranged in chronological order. Then, applying the 'data cleansing' technique we selected only relevant tweets and their top ten replies/comments. Data cleansing was done by applying key terms like; 'regime change', 'imported government', 'foreign conspiracy', 'no confidence motion/NCM', 'political situation' and 'opposition movement'. After data cleansing, we found out 06 tweets from the twitter handle of Imran Khan (@ImranKhanPTI), 04 tweets from the twitter handle of Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman (@MoulanaOfficial) and 03 tweets from the twitter handle of Shehbaz Sharif (@CMShehbaz). To select the minimum equal sample size i.e. three tweets from each twitter handle we applied systematic sampling on @ImranKhanPTI and selected first, third and fifth tweets. Similarly, we selected initial three tweets from @MoulanaOfficial and all three tweets from @CMShehbaz.

Data Analysis; Thematic Analysis (TA)

Keeping in view suitability with the scope, objectives and research questions of this study we have employed the Thematic Analysis (TA) as a tool to analyze the selected data set. TA is a technique for finding, examining, and evaluating patterns of meaning, also known as themes, in data. The objective of TA is to discover and understand significant, but not necessarily all, characteristics of the data. Thematic analysis, which involves identifying, assessing, and noting patterns or themes, aids the researcher in deriving meanings from data (Tari & Emamzadeh, 2018). TA offers the researchers a flexibility for approaching research patterns in two ways i.e. inductive, and deductive (Frith & Gleeson 2004). TA approaches are appropriate when samples are determined and defined before proceeding with the study. We can use TA when we must interpret and compare two sets of data in inductive and deductive way. As argued by Clarke and Braun (2013) TA is a technique for summarising data, but when choosing codes and creating themes, it also involves interpretation.

Keeping in view the suitability of the TA with the overall scope, objectives and research questions of this study we have employed TA inductively to explore and analyse the predominant themes within the 'political discourse' and 'public response' regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan during April 2022 on Twitter.

Results and Discussion

Thematic Analysis of the tweets by Imran Khan (@ImranKhanPTI)

Tweet#01

Imran Khan ✔
@ImranKhanPTI

Pakistan became an independent state in 1947; but the freedom struggle begins again today against a foreign conspiracy of regime change. It is always the people of the country who defend their sovereignty & democracy.

4:04 PM · Apr 10, 2022 · Twitter for Android

68.5K Retweets   **5,668** Quote Tweets   **263.7K** Likes

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet;

This tweet contains warning for the nation. In this tweet, Imran Khan talks about how his government has been toppled through foreign conspiracy. He has created the narrative that even though Pakistan became independent nation in 1947, today it's not anymore as the decision of the country have been taken by foreign powers. Imran Khan says, it's the duty of the public to be independent and stand against regime change and struggle for the dependence. Predominant codes available in the tweet are; 'freedom struggle', 'foreign conspiracy', 'regime change', 'sovereignty', and 'democracy'. So, keeping in view the available codes in the tweet it can be concluded that the tweet has 'regime change' as a predominant theme and the 'regime change' in Pakistan has been conflated with a 'foreign conspiracy' and with an attack on national 'sovereignty' and 'democracy' in the country. Therefore, it can be concluded that the tweet carries Imran Khan's strong and explicit 'political discourse' of 'regime change' and 'foreign conspiracy' against his government.
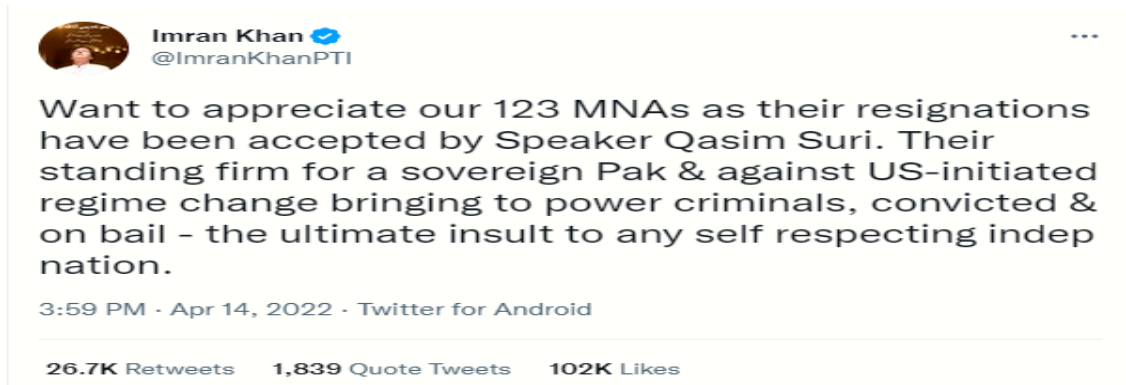
Top 10 Comments/Replies;
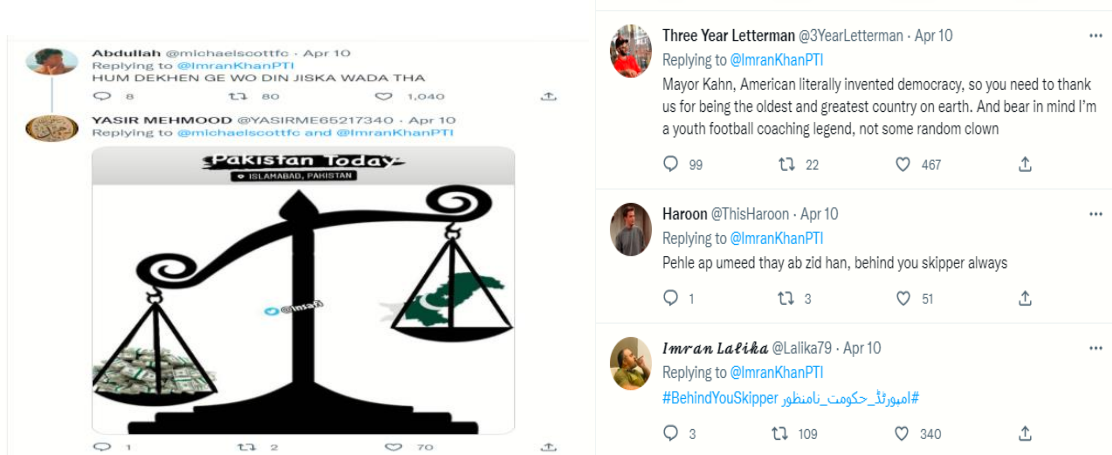
Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies

The majority of the replies/responses/comments to the above tweet by Imran Khan contains positive codes and there is only one negative response. Some people are appreciating Imran Khan by saying that you were our 'hope' but now you are our 'pride'. One picture had an illustrated character crying, while one picture showed that money is now worth more than the country, while one person said that these PDM leaders will be left alone but we as a nation will always stand with you. The response goes like 'behind you skipper' which show solidarity with Imran Khan. The only negative response is asking Imran Khan to thank the US instead of blaming it.

Overall, the responses/replies/comments contains predominant codes for Imran Khan as; *Umeed* i.e. Hope, *Zidd* i.e. Pride, nation stands with you i.e. solidarity, people love you i.e. affection/support, *khan tery bughaz me bary bary kirdar giry* i.e. all big opponents are defeated. So, keeping in view the available codes in the responses it can be concluded that the responses have solidarity and support in favor of Imran Khan, and 'foreign conspiracy' as predominant themes in them. Therefore, it can be claimed that the 'public response' is favoring Imran Khan's 'political discourse' of 'regime change' and 'foreign conspiracy' against his government.

Tweet#02

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet;

This tweet contains a big statement from Khan; 'Never have such crowds come out so spontaneously and in such numbers in our history, rejecting the imported govt. led by crooks.' In this tweet, Imran Khan shares a video footage from Lahore where people came in his support after his removal from the PM office. In this tweet Imran says he never saw such big numbers of public coming out by themselves and rejecting the new government. According to the available codes in the tweet i.e. imported govt., crooks, such crowds in such numbers, and spontaneously it can be concluded that the predominant theme of the tweet is 'regime change' wherein Imran Khan reiterate his 'political discourse' against the NCM resulted PDM government. Therefore, it can be concluded that the tweet carries Imran Khan's strong and explicit 'political discourse' of 'regime change' against his government.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies;

Seven out of ten replies contain codes like; *adaltain* i.e. courts of law, *neutrals* i.e. name calling employed by Imran Khan for the military establishment, *Imported Hakumat* referred to the NCM resulted PDM government as a government supported by the 'foreign conspiracy' and they messed up with the wrong person. Two out these seven responses contain the hashtag *imported Hakumat namanzoor* i.e. say no to the imported government or the imported government is not accepted. One reply contains 'solidarity' for Imran Khan in the form of a widely quoted Urdu stanza in favor of Imran Khan *hum khary thy khary hain khary rahain gy yaqeen k sath emaan k sath Imran Khan k sath* i.e. we have and we will be standing by Imran Khan with faith and belief. One out of remaining three responses is a polite complaint against a local PTI ticket holder and the other two are claiming that pictures of the public demonstration seem to be edited or belong to some other incident. So, keeping in view the available codes in the responses it can be concluded that the responses have solidarity and support in favor of Imran Khan, and 'foreign conspiracy' as predominant themes in them. Therefore, it can be claimed that the 'public response' is favoring Imran

Khan's 'political discourse' of 'regime change' and 'foreign conspiracy' against his government.

Tweet#03

Imran Khan ✔
@ImranKhanPTI

Want to appreciate our 123 MNAs as their resignations have been accepted by Speaker Qasim Suri. Their standing firm for a sovereign Pak & against US-initiated regime change bringing to power criminals, convicted & on bail – the ultimate insult to any self respecting indep nation.

3:59 PM · Apr 14, 2022 · Twitter for Android

26.7K Retweets　　**1,839** Quote Tweets　　**102K** Likes

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet

This tweet contains appreciation by Khan for his MNAs 'Want to appreciate our 123 MNAs as their resignations have been accepted by Speaker Qasim Suri.' And exposed PDM; 'Their standing firm for a sovereign Pak & against US-initiated regime change bringing to power criminals, convicted & on bail - the ultimate insult to any self-respecting indep nation.' In this tweet, Imran Khan appreciates his Ministers of National Assembly (MNA's) for resigning from their national assembly seats and speaker assembly for accepting these resignations. Imran Khan reiterate his 'political discourse' of 'regime change' and the US supported conspiracy against his government. Also, the tweet contains criticism for the newly elected leadership labelling them as criminals and insult to the self-respecting nation.

Predominant codes available in the tweet are; 'appreciate' i.e. appreciation for the resigning MNAs, 'sovereign Pak', 'US-initiated regime change', 'criminals', 'convicted & on-bail', 'ultimate insult', and 'self-respecting indep nation'. So, keeping in view the available codes in the tweet it can be concluded that the tweet has 'regime change' as a predominant theme and the 'regime change' in Pakistan has been conflated with a 'US-initiated' 'foreign conspiracy' and with an attack on national 'sovereignty' and 'self-respect' of the nation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the tweet carries Imran Khan's strong and explicit 'political discourse' of 'regime change' and 'foreign conspiracy' against his government.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies;

Nine out of ten replies/comments contain predominant codes like; hashtag *imported Hakumat namanzoor*, titles for Imran Khan like *Murshad* i.e. mentor, king, *junoon* i.e. passion. Five out ten resplies contain hashtag *imported Hakumat namanzoor* i.e. say no to the imported government or the imported government is not accepted. One reply show solidarity as Khan Sahib ap hukm kerain hamari jan bhi hazir hai ap k lye i.e. dear Khan you give order and we can sacrifice ourselves for you. There is only one response that shares a statement from the Director General Inter Services Public Relations (DG-ISPR) that rejects the alleged 'conspiracy' against the Khan's removal. The response contains codes like; *jhoot* i.e. lie, *awam ko chuna lagana* i.e. misleading the public, kursi hai tumhara janaza nahi i.e. the PM seat is not your death bed. So, keeping in view the available codes in the responses it can be concluded that the responses have solidarity and support in favor of Imran Khan, and 'foreign conspiracy' as predominant themes in them. Therefore, it can be claimed that the 'public response' is favoring Imran Khan's 'political discourse' of 'regime change' and 'foreign conspiracy' against his government.

Thematic Analysis of the tweets by Maulana Faz-ur-Rehman (@MoulanaOfficial)

Tweet#01

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet

This tweet by Maulana shares a hashtag #NationalAssembly with a video of him in the national assembly greeting the people after the success of the NCM in the national assembly. This tweet does not contain any words apart from the hashtag. However, this is worth noting that this was the first time he appeared in the national assembly ever since former Prime Minister Imran Khan assumed the premiership of the country. Hence,

Maulana's presence in the assembly and this hashtag after the success of NCM is an evidence that the tweet is about the No Confidence Motion (NCM). Therefore, it can be claimed that the tweet's predominant theme within the 'political discourse' is the No Confidence Motion.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Tweet#02
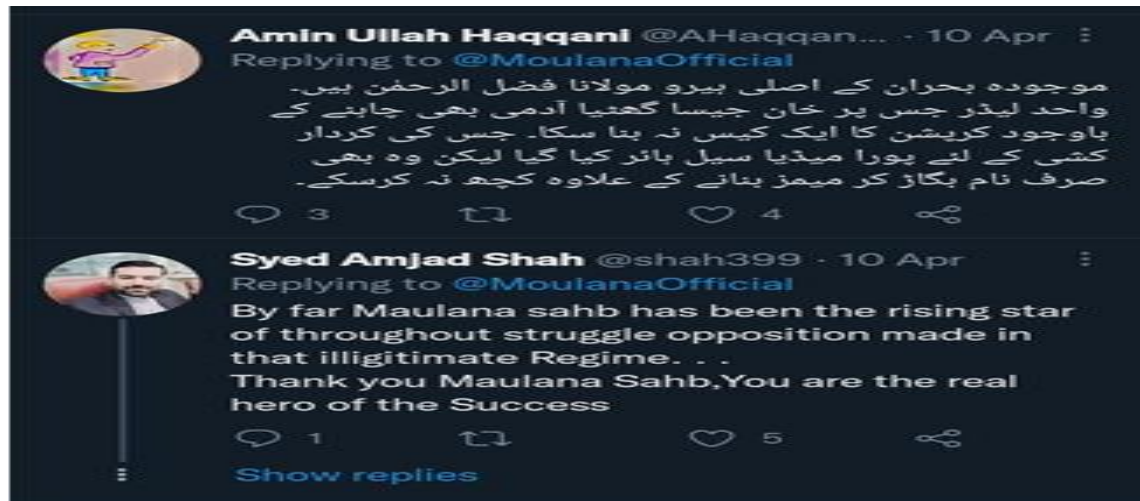
Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies;

Six out of ten replies/response/comments under the tweet contain codes like; *quaid teri basserat ko salam* i.e. salute to the vision of the leader, *Maulana per sab kuch qurban* i.e. we can sacrifice everything for Maulana, great leader, leader of revolution, real hero, and rising star. Within these six tweets two contains derogatory codes for the depose PM Imran Khan like; *badd tameez* i.e. insolent, *badd tehzeeb* i.e. uncivilized, *yahudi agent* i.e. Jew agent, *ghatia admi* i.e. cheap man. All these codes available in these six tweets are the evidence that the majority of the people appearing under this tweet have supported the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion'. Remaining four replies contain codes like; *British army ka sobedar* i.e. Soldier of British Army, *firangiun ka Ghulam* i.e. Slave of Englishmen, *qabil e sharam* i.e. shameful, *qabil e reham* i.e. pathetic, *zameer ferosh* i.e. conscience seller, *khan k*

hoty huye jurrat na ker saka i.e. cowardly man, and 'diesel' i.e. a political label used against Maulana as name calling for his alleged illegal diesel permits. The codes available in these four tweets label Maulana Fazl ur Rehman as a pawn of the foreign powers which implies that this 'public response' is against the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion'. However, the predominant theme within these replies/comments/response is the 'No-Confidence Motion'.
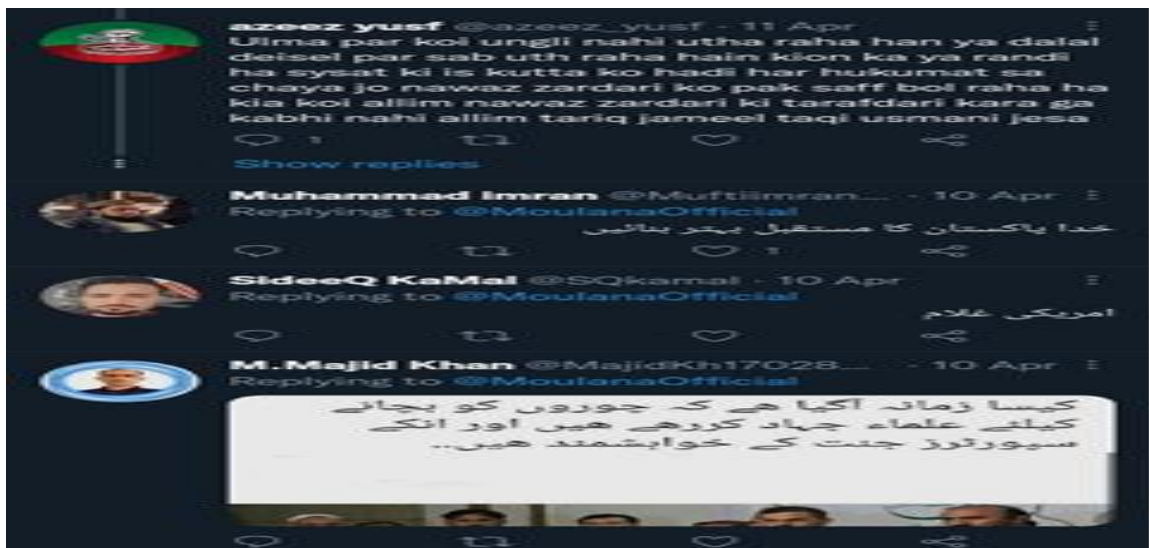

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet

This tweet by Maulana shares a hashtag #NewProfilePic with his picture showing victory sign in the national assembly greeting the people after the success of the NCM. This tweet does not contain any words apart from the hashtag. The new profile pic portraying smiling Maulana with a victory sign reflects the 'political discourse' of the success of the NCM. Hence, the tweet is about the No Confidence Motion (NCM). Therefore, it can be claimed that the tweet's predominant theme within the 'political discourse' is the 'No-Confidence Motion'.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies

Six out of ten replies/response/comments under the tweet contain codes like; *kanjar dallal* i.e. bastard pimp, *fuzlando* (a political name calling used for Maulana and his followers) *ko thuda par gea* i.e. Maulana is ignored or fooled, *lanat ho tum per* i.e. damn you, *munafiq insan* i.e. a hypocrite. Within these six tweets one contains a caricature explaining the 'regime change' operation in Pakistan and refer Maulana as foreign tool of this operation. Another reply shares a collage of two pictures showing leaders of Maulana party sitting shoulder to shoulder to females with a caption of elaborating a 'fatwa' (order according to Sharia Law) that prohibits religious leaders to sit with '*gher mehram*' i.e. stranger women. Two tweets share the hashtag *imported Hakumat namanzoor* i.e. say no to the imported government or the imported government is not accepted. All these codes available in these six tweets are the evidence that the majority of the people appearing under this tweet have opposed and criticized the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' and supported the 'political discourse' of 'regime change', 'foreign conspiracy'. Remaining four replies contain codes like; *MashaAllah* (27 times in one tweet), *baba e jamhuriyat* i.e. father of democracy, congratulations, *murshad* i.e. mentor, *qaum e youth* i.e. nation of youth (since majority of Imran Khan's following is from the youth of the country therefore a political name calling is usually used for the PTI followers). The codes available in these four tweets are in favor of Maulana Fazal ur Rehman and against PTI which implies that this 'public response' is in favor the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion'. However, the predominant theme within these replies/comments/response is the 'regime change', and 'foreign conspiracy'.

Tweet#03

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet

In this tweet Maulana Fazal ur Rehman shares a picture showing meeting between him and the president PML-N Mian Shehbaz Sharif to celebrate the success of the NCM. This tweet contains codes like; congratulations, success and opposition movement. The available codes in the tweet suggest that the tweet is about the NCM. Therefore, it can be claimed that the tweet's predominant theme within the 'political discourse' is the 'No-Confidence Motion'.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies

Eight out of ten replies/comments/responses contain predominant codes like; *ana parast generals* i.e. egoistic Army generals, *chor* i.e. thief, *dakku* i.e. robber, *eqtidar per musallat* i.e. usurpers, *ghaddar* i.e. traitor, *dallal* i.e. pimp, diesel i.e. a political label used against Maulana as name calling for his alleged illegal diesel permits*, amreeki Ghulam* i.e. American Slave. One out ten replies contain a code *Ulema per bhonkny waly* i.e. ones who bark at religious scholars which means the reply criticizes the public response on the tweet. One reply seems to be neutral as it contains a wish i.e. *Khuda Pakistan ka mustaqbil behter banaye* i.e. praying for the best future of Pakistan. Considering the available codes in the replies it can be claimed that the 'public response' is criticizing and opposing Maulana Fazal ur Rehman's 'political discourse' of 'opposition movement' and 'NCM'.

Thematic Analysis of the tweets by Shehbaz Sharif (@CMShehbaz)

Tweet#01

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet

  This tweet by Shehbaz Sharif on the eve of success of NCM comes with predominant codes such as; *khasoosi rehmat* i.e. special blessing, Alhamdulillah i.e. thanks to Allah, *sangeen bohran* i.e. severe crisis, *nae sehr* i.e. new morning/beginning. The available codes in the tweet imply that the President PML-N Shehbaz Sharif conflate the success of NCM with the special blessing and new beginning/morning for the nation. And, the government of former Prime Minister Imran Khan has been portrayed as severe crisis in this tweet. So, the available codes imply that the predominant theme in the tweet is the 'No-Confidence Motion'. Therefore, it can be concluded that Shehbaz Sharif promotes his 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' by congratulating the nation and by conflating the success of the NCM with a special divine blessing.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies;

       Eight out of the ten replies/responses/comments contain predominant themes such as; Beggars (beggars used in 5 out of ten tweets) can't be leaders, *khareeday huay vote* i.e. bought votes, *behsharaam* i.e. shameful, chor i.e. thief (chor is used 2 out of ten tweets), imported Prime Minister, and American dog. And, the hashtags used in these eight tweets include the following; #ImranKhanVsWesternSlaves, #ImranKhanTrueLeader, #importedhakoomatnamanzoor i.e. say not to the imported government or the imported government is not accepted, #ImranKhanPM and #NoMoreShehbazSharif. One out of remaining two replies goes like; Hasid hasad ki aag me khud ji jala kery i.e. jealous is burning in the fire of jealousy. This tweet goes in favor of the success of the NCM. Similarly, the other tweet out of remaining 2 tweets uses code of congratulation. So, keeping in view the available codes in the replies/comments/responses it can be claimed that the predominant theme in them is 'regime change' and the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' in the tweet of Shehbaz Sharif has been rejected, criticized and opposed by the 'public response' quite explicitly.

Tweet#02

Shehbaz Sharif ✔
@CMShehbaz

Special thanks to media, civil society, lawyers, my Quaid Nawaz Sharif, Asif Zardari, Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, Bilawal Bhutto, Khalid Maqbool, Khalid Magsi, Mosin Dawar, Ali Wazir, Amir Haider Hoti & leaders & workers of all political parties for standing up for the Constitution!

1:36 PM · 4/10/22 · Twitter for iPhone

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet

       This tweet by Shehbaz Sharif on the eve of success of NCM comes with predominant codes such as; special thanks, all parties, standing up for the constitution. The available codes in the tweet imply that the President PML-N Shehbaz Sharif conflate the success of NCM with the win of constitution. And, that all the political parties are with him. So, the available codes imply that the predominant theme in the tweet is the 'No-Confidence Motion'. Therefore, it can be concluded that Shehbaz Sharif promotes his 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' by thanking the media, civil society and all the political parties for 'standing up for the constitution'.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies;

Seven out of the ten replies/responses/comments contain predominant themes such as; chor i.e. thief, awami mandate pe dakka i.e. stealing the public mandate/usurpers, bhikaari i.e. beggar. And, the hashtags used in two out these seven tweets include the following; #importedhakoomatnamanzoor and #importedgovernmentnamanzoor i.e. say not to the imported government or the imported government is not accepted. One of these seven tweets show a vulture face over a human body dressed up in a formal suit with a caption 'thank you for making it possible for me to come back in power, I am very hungry, let's eat this country together. One tweet comes up with a caricature showing Asif Ali Zardai,

the leader of Pakistan People's Party, throwing money over a dancing woman. The caption of the caricature goes like *Azad adlia zindabad* i.e. long live independent judiciary which means it is a satire on the role of judiciary. Remaining three tweets contain codes such as; congratulations, no confidence motion, and stanza depicting a PML-N worker fighting the police officials. These three tweets go in favor of the success of the NCM which means they support the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion'. So, keeping in view the available codes in the replies/comments/responses it can be claimed that the predominant theme in them is 'regime change' and the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' in the tweet of Shehbaz Sharif has been rejected, criticized and opposed by the 'public response' quite explicitly.

Tweet#03

Shehbaz Sharif ✔
@CMShehbaz

I want to congratulate people of Pakistan on peaceful transition of power. It's matter of pride that today all our institutions respect Constitution as guiding principle. If stock market & strengthening currency is any indication, the journey towards our goals has already started

11:14 PM · 4/11/22 · Twitter for iPhone

Thematic Analysis of the Tweet

This tweet by Shehbaz Sharif after taking oath as Prime Minister of Pakistan as a result of the success of the NCM comes with predominant codes such as; congratulations, peaceful transition of power, matter of pride, respect constitution, strengthening currency. The available codes in the tweet imply that the President of the PML-N and the new Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif conflates the success of NCM and his premiership with the 'peaceful transition of the power', success of constitution and with the strengthening of the currency. So, the available codes imply that the predominant theme in the tweet is the 'No-Confidence Motion'. Therefore, it can be concluded that Shehbaz Sharif promotes his 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' by congratulating the nation and by conflating the success of the NCM with success of constitution and with the strengthening of the currency.

Top 10 Comments/Replies

Thematic Analysis of the Comments/Replies

Ten out of the ten replies/responses/comments contain predominant themes such as; Beggars can't be leaders, crime minister. The hashtags used in these tweets include the following; #importedhakoomatnamanzoor (used 5 times in 4 tweets) i.e. say not to the imported government or the imported government is not accepted, #PakistanNeedsElections. Three out of these tweets contain a picture of Shehbaz Sharif with red color stamp on it with a prominent word 'imported' on it. Two tweets portray Shehbaz Sharif as a beggar with his face on a beggar's body. Two tweets address the judiciary as; *shetan ne b Supreme Court me petition jama kerwa de* i.e. the devil has writ petition in the Supreme Court, and *my lord Supreme Court kholo hamara mandate chori hua hai* i.e. My Lord open Supreme Court our mandate has been stole. So, keeping in view the available codes in the replies/comments/responses it can be easily claimed that the predominant theme in them is 'regime change' and the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' in the tweet of Shehbaz Sharif has been rejected, criticized and opposed by the 'public response' quite explicitly.

Conclusion

After a very careful Thematic Analysis (TA) of the 'political discourse' regarding the 'regime change' and/or the 'No-Confidence Motion' within the under study nine tweets and the 'public response' in the form of ninety responses/comments/replies under those nine tweets it can be concluded that the predominant themes within the 'political discourse' produced by Mr. Imran Khan through his twitter handle regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan during April 10th to 14th 2022 were; 'foreign conspiracy', attack on national sovereignty and democracy, imported govt., government of crooks, 'US-initiated' 'foreign conspiracy', attack on 'self-respect' of the nation. On the other hand, the predominant theme within the 'political discourse' produced by Mr. Fazal ur Rehman through his twitter handle regarding the 'regime change' was 'No-Confidence Motion'. Similarly, the predominant themes within the 'political discourse' produced by Mr. Shehbaz Sharif through his twitter handle regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan were; 'No-Confidence Motion', 'standing up for the constitution', and success of constitution. So, both the members of the PDM produced their 'political discourse' in the form of 'No-Confidence Motion', 'standing up for the constitution', and success of constitution under the pretext of 'regime change'.

Available findings and their analysis show that out of thirty responses/comments/replies to the three tweets by Mr. Imran Khan twenty five supported and replicated the 'political discourse' produced by Mr. Khan in his tweets. Four out of thirty

opposed his 'political discourse' and one response was neutral. So, overall the 'public response' has been found to be supporting and replicating the 'political discourse' produced by Mr. Khan in his tweets. On the other hand, out of thirty responses/comments/replies to the three tweets by Mr. Fazal ur Rehman twenty contained criticism and opposition to the political discourse of 'NCM' in the three tweets by Maulana Fazal ur Rehman. Nine of the thirty responses supported and replicated the 'political discourse' produced by him and one was neutral in the form of a prayer for Pakistan. And, out of thirty responses/comments/replies to the three tweets by Mr. Shehbaz Sharif twenty five contained criticism and opposition to the political discourse of 'NCM' in the three tweets by Mr. Shehbaz Sharif. Five out of the thirty responses supported and replicated the 'political discourse' produced by him.

Conclusively, the research findings at hand are the evidence that the 'public response' have explicitly supported and replicated the 'political discourse' of 'US-initiated' and 'foreign conspiracy' backed 'regime change' in Pakistan which resulted in the form of removal of Mr. Imran Khan as Prime Minster. People have clearly rejected the 'political discourse' of 'No-Confidence Motion' and of 'successful opposition movement'. In a more precise way it can be claimed that the 'public response' reflected, supported and replicated the 'political discourse' of Mr. Imran Khan regarding the 'regime change' in Pakistan during April 2022.

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