Ms. Ruchika Kadu, 2026, 14:4
ISSN (Online): 2348-4098
ISSN (Print): 2395-4752

International Journal of Science, Engineering and Technology
An Open Access Journal

Sentiment Analysis of Social Media Text for Identifying Public Opinion, Trends, and Consumer Behavior

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Abstract- The exponential growth of social media platforms has fundamentally transformed the way individuals communicate, share opinions, express emotions, and influence public discussions across the world. Platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, LinkedIn, and YouTube generate billions of user-generated posts, comments, reviews, and discussions every day. These digital interactions represent a valuable source of information that reflects people's attitudes, emotions, preferences, experiences, and behavioral patterns regarding products, services, political events, healthcare, education, entertainment, and social issues. As organizations increasingly rely on data-driven decision-making, extracting meaningful knowledge from this vast amount of unstructured textual data has become an important research area. Sentiment Analysis, also known as Opinion Mining, has emerged as one of the most effective Artificial Intelligence (AI) techniques for automatically identifying and classifying emotions, opinions, and attitudes expressed in textual content. Sentiment Analysis integrates Natural Language Processing (NLP), Machine Learning (ML), Deep Learning (DL), and computational linguistics to analyze textual information and determine whether a particular opinion is positive, negative, or neutral. Unlike traditional data analysis methods that mainly focus on structured numerical information, sentiment analysis enables organizations to interpret human emotions and understand public perceptions from unstructured social media content. This capability provides significant advantages in understanding customer satisfaction, monitoring brand reputation, identifying emerging trends, predicting market behavior, and supporting strategic decision-making. The increasing adoption of Artificial Intelligence has further enhanced the accuracy and scalability of sentiment analysis systems, making them capable of processing millions of social media posts in real time.

Keywords— Sentiment Analysis, Opinion Mining, Social Media Analytics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Deep Learning (DL), Natural Language Processing (NLP), Text Mining, Data Mining, Consumer Behavior, Public Opinion Analysis, Trend Analysis, Social Media Text, Twitter Analysis, Facebook Analytics, Instagram Analytics, Reddit Analytics, Emotion Detection, Polarity Classification, Feature Extraction, Text Classification, Large Language Models (LLMs).

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of the Internet and digital communication technologies has fundamentally transformed the way people communicate, share opinions, and interact with organizations across the globe. Social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, LinkedIn, YouTube, and online discussion forums have become primary channels for expressing personal experiences, emotions, preferences, and opinions. Every day, billions of users generate enormous volumes of textual data through posts, comments, reviews, hashtags, blogs, and discussions. This continuously growing collection of user-generated content represents one of the richest sources of public opinion and behavioral information available in the digital era. As organizations increasingly recognize the value of these data, analyzing social media content has become a major area of research in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Science, and Business Analytics.

Unlike traditional surveys and questionnaires, social media provides real-time, spontaneous, and large-scale public responses on a wide variety of topics. Individuals openly express their views regarding products, services, government policies, healthcare systems, educational institutions, political events, financial markets, sports, entertainment, and environmental issues. These opinions reflect public attitudes that continuously evolve based on current events and personal experiences. Consequently, organizations are increasingly utilizing social media analytics to understand customer expectations, identify emerging market trends, evaluate public perception, and support strategic decision-making. However, manually analyzing millions of textual messages is both time-consuming and impractical, creating the need for intelligent automated analysis techniques. Sentiment Analysis, also known as Opinion Mining, has emerged as one of the most important techniques for extracting meaningful information from unstructured textual data. Sentiment Analysis applies Artificial Intelligence, Natural Language Processing (NLP), Machine Learning (ML), Deep Learning (DL), and Computational Linguistics to automatically determine the emotional tone or sentiment expressed in text. The primary objective of sentiment analysis is to classify opinions as positive, negative, or neutral while identifying the emotions and attitudes associated with specific topics. Advanced sentiment analysis systems can also recognize complex emotional categories such as happiness, anger, sadness, fear, surprise, trust, and frustration, providing deeper insights into human behavior and public perception.

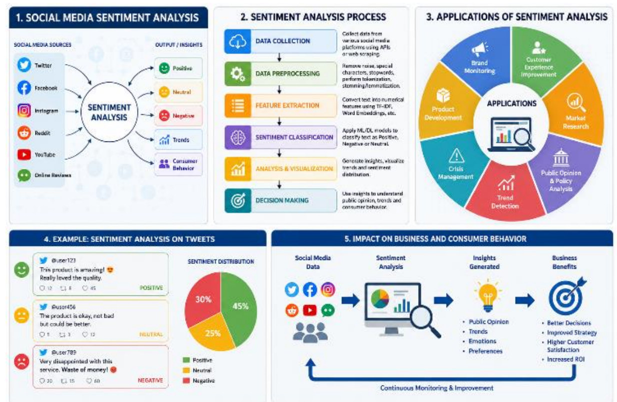
The importance of sentiment analysis has grown significantly because organizations increasingly depend on digital information to make informed decisions. Businesses analyze customer reviews and social media discussions to evaluate product quality, monitor brand reputation, improve customer satisfaction, and design effective marketing campaigns. E-commerce companies utilize sentiment analysis to understand consumer purchasing behavior and optimize product recommendations. Financial institutions monitor investor sentiment to anticipate market fluctuations and investment opportunities. Healthcare organizations analyze patient opinions regarding healthcare services, medical treatments, and public health campaigns to improve healthcare delivery. Government agencies use sentiment analysis to monitor public reactions toward policies, social welfare programs, disaster management initiatives, and national events. Educational institutions evaluate student feedback to improve teaching quality and learning experiences. These diverse applications demonstrate the growing significance of sentiment analysis across multiple industries. The increasing adoption of Artificial Intelligence has significantly improved the capabilities of sentiment analysis systems. Traditional sentiment analysis methods primarily relied on manually created sentiment lexicons and rule-based approaches that identified positive and negative words within text. Although these techniques provided useful initial results, they often struggled with contextual understanding, sarcasm, irony, ambiguous expressions, and evolving internet language. Recent advancements in Machine Learning and Deep Learning have enabled the development of intelligent models capable of learning complex language patterns directly from data. Algorithms such as Naïve Bayes, Support Vector Machines (SVM), Decision Trees, Random Forests, Logistic Regression, Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN), and Transformer-based architectures have substantially improved sentiment classification accuracy. One of the most significant developments in recent years has been the introduction of transformer-based language models such as BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers), RoBERTa, XLNet, DistilBERT, GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer), and other Large Language Models (LLMs). These models understand contextual relationships between words rather than analyzing them individually, allowing more accurate interpretation of complex sentences and conversational language. Their ability to process contextual information has dramatically improved sentiment classification, emotion detection, sarcasm recognition, multilingual analysis, and topic identification across various social media platforms. Despite these technological advancements, sentiment analysis continues to face several important challenges. Social media content is highly informal and contains abbreviations, emojis, hashtags, slang expressions, internet acronyms, spelling mistakes, multilingual content, and rapidly evolving vocabulary. Users frequently express opinions using sarcasm, irony, humor, implicit meanings, and mixed emotions that are difficult for computational models to interpret accurately. Furthermore, fake reviews, spam messages, bot-generated content, misinformation campaigns, and coordinated social media manipulation can significantly influence analytical results.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The rapid expansion of social media platforms has generated an unprecedented volume of user-generated content, creating valuable opportunities for researchers and organizations to analyze public opinion, consumer preferences, and emerging societal trends. Over the past two decades, Sentiment Analysis, also referred to as Opinion Mining, has evolved into one of the most active research areas in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Natural Language Processing (NLP), Machine Learning (ML), Data Mining, and Computational Linguistics. Researchers have proposed numerous techniques to automatically extract opinions, emotions, and attitudes from textual data, enabling organizations to gain actionable insights from millions of online discussions. The existing literature demonstrates continuous progress from simple lexicon-based approaches to sophisticated deep learning models capable of understanding context, semantics, and complex human emotions. Early sentiment analysis research primarily relied on lexicon-based methods in which predefined dictionaries of positive and negative words were used to determine sentiment polarity. These methods compared words in a sentence against sentiment lexicons such as SentiWordNet, AFINN, and VADER to classify opinions into positive, negative, or neutral categories. Lexicon-based approaches were computationally efficient and easy to implement; however, they exhibited several limitations when analyzing informal social media language. Researchers observed that these techniques struggled to interpret sarcasm, irony, contextual meanings, abbreviations, slang expressions, emojis, and multilingual content, resulting in reduced classification accuracy. Consequently, researchers began exploring more intelligent computational methods capable of learning complex language patterns directly from data.

The introduction of Machine Learning significantly transformed sentiment analysis research. Supervised learning algorithms such as Naïve Bayes, Support Vector Machines (SVM), Logistic Regression, Decision Trees, Random Forests, and K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN) became widely adopted for sentiment classification tasks. These algorithms learned relationships between textual features and sentiment categories using labeled datasets. Researchers demonstrated that machine learning models achieved higher classification accuracy than traditional lexicon-based techniques, particularly when combined with feature extraction methods such as Bag-of-Words (BoW), Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency (TF-IDF), and N-gram analysis. Numerous comparative studies concluded that Support Vector Machines and Logistic Regression consistently produced reliable performance for binary and multi-class sentiment classification problems. As social media data continued to increase in complexity and volume, researchers recognized the limitations of conventional machine learning techniques in capturing semantic relationships and contextual information. This led to the adoption of Deep Learning methodologies capable of automatically learning hierarchical language representations. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN), Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN), Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), and Gated Recurrent Units (GRU) emerged as powerful architectures for sentiment analysis. Unlike traditional feature engineering approaches, deep learning models automatically extracted meaningful features from textual data and demonstrated superior performance in identifying contextual sentiment. Numerous studies reported that LSTM networks performed particularly well in analyzing sequential text because of their ability to preserve long-term contextual dependencies within sentences. The emergence of transformer-based language models marked another major milestone in sentiment analysis research. Models such as BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers), RoBERTa, XLNet, DistilBERT, ALBERT, and GPT-based architectures introduced contextual language understanding by analyzing the relationship between words in both forward and backward directions. These models significantly improved sentiment classification accuracy across multiple benchmark datasets by effectively capturing semantic meaning, contextual relationships, and sentence structure. Comparative studies consistently reported that transformer-based models outperformed both conventional machine learning algorithms and earlier deep learning architectures, particularly when processing complex social media conversations containing ambiguous or context-dependent language. Researchers have also investigated multilingual sentiment analysis due to the increasing diversity of social media users worldwide. Traditional sentiment analysis systems were primarily designed for English-language datasets; however, global digital communication requires support for multiple languages.

Recent studies have developed multilingual transformer models capable of processing textual information across numerous languages while preserving contextual understanding. These advancements have expanded the applicability of sentiment analysis in international business, multilingual customer support, cross-cultural research, and global market intelligence. Another important research direction involves aspect-based sentiment analysis (ABSA). Unlike traditional sentiment classification, which determines the overall sentiment of an entire document, aspect-based approaches identify sentiment associated with specific product features, services, or discussion topics. Researchers have demonstrated that ABSA provides more detailed insights into customer opinions by separating positive and negative sentiments related to individual product attributes such as quality, price, usability, durability, customer service, and performance. This fine-grained analysis enables organizations to identify strengths and weaknesses more accurately and supports targeted product improvements.



III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this research follows a systematic Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing (NLP)-based framework for analyzing social media text to identify public opinion, emerging trends, and consumer behavior. The proposed methodology consists of multiple interconnected stages, beginning with social media data collection and ending with sentiment visualization and decision-making. The framework combines data preprocessing, feature engineering, sentiment classification, performance evaluation, and result visualization to ensure accurate and reliable sentiment prediction. Data were collected from popular social media platforms such as X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, YouTube comments, online discussion forums, and product review websites using publicly available datasets and APIs. These platforms provide diverse user-generated content containing opinions, emotions, reviews, comments, hashtags, and discussions related to products, services, political events, healthcare, education, finance, and entertainment.

The collected data consist of structured and unstructured textual information, requiring preprocessing before analysis. The first stage of the methodology focuses on data acquisition. Large volumes of social media posts, comments, customer reviews, and discussion threads are gathered from multiple sources to ensure diversity in language, topics, and user demographics. This stage ensures that the dataset accurately represents real-world public opinions and consumer interactions. To maintain data quality, duplicate records, advertisements, spam messages, bot-generated content, and irrelevant information are removed before further processing. The second stage involves data preprocessing, which is one of the most critical components of sentiment analysis. Raw social media text usually contains noise such as URLs, hyperlinks, hashtags, user mentions, punctuation marks, special symbols, emojis, spelling mistakes, abbreviations, and inconsistent capitalization. Text preprocessing includes converting all text into lowercase, removing stop words, eliminating unnecessary punctuation, tokenization, stemming, lemmatization, and normalization. Emojis are converted into textual representations because they often carry important emotional information. Slang words and internet abbreviations are expanded using predefined dictionaries to improve sentiment interpretation. These preprocessing operations significantly improve the quality of textual data and enhance the performance of classification models. Following preprocessing, the feature extraction stage transforms textual information into numerical representations suitable for machine learning algorithms. Various feature engineering techniques are employed, including Bag-of-Words (BoW), Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency (TF-IDF), Word2Vec, FastText, GloVe embeddings, and contextual embeddings generated by transformer-based language models such as BERT and RoBERTa. These methods capture semantic relationships between words and preserve contextual information necessary for accurate sentiment classification. Feature selection techniques are also applied to reduce dimensionality and eliminate irrelevant features, thereby improving computational efficiency.

The next stage consists of sentiment classification, where machine learning and deep learning algorithms classify each social media post into positive, negative, or neutral sentiment categories. Traditional supervised learning algorithms including Naïve Bayes, Logistic Regression, Support Vector Machine (SVM), Decision Tree, Random Forest, and K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN) are evaluated alongside advanced deep learning architectures such as Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN), Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), Bidirectional LSTM (Bi-LSTM), and transformer-based models including BERT and GPT. Comparative analysis is performed to determine which algorithm achieves the highest accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. The sentiment classification process also includes emotion detection, allowing identification of emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, and trust. To ensure the reliability of the proposed framework, model evaluation is conducted using standard performance metrics. The dataset is divided into training and testing subsets using an appropriate validation strategy. Model performance is measured using Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1-Score, Confusion Matrix, ROC Curve, and Area Under Curve (AUC).

Cross-validation techniques are employed to minimize overfitting and ensure consistent performance across different datasets. Comparative statistical analysis identifies the strengths and limitations of each classification model. The final stage focuses on visualization and interpretation of sentiment analysis results. Interactive dashboards, bar charts, pie charts, heat maps, trend analysis graphs, word clouds, confusion matrices, and time-series visualizations are generated to present analytical findings in an easily understandable format. These visualizations help organizations identify customer satisfaction levels, emerging public trends, brand perception, consumer preferences, and behavioural patterns. The insights obtained from sentiment analysis support business intelligence, marketing strategy development, customer relationship management, policy formulation, crisis management, and decision-making processes.

Phase	Activity	Techniques Used	Output
Phase 1	Data Collection	Twitter API, Facebook, Reddit,	Social Media Dataset

Phase	Activity	Techniques Used	Output
		Instagram, YouTube	
Phase 2	Data Preprocessing	Tokenization, Stop-word Removal, Lemmatization	Clean Text
Phase 3	Feature Extraction	TF-IDF, Word2Vec, BERT Embeddings	Feature Vectors
Phase 4	Sentiment Classification	Naïve Bayes, SVM, Random Forest, LSTM, BERT	Positive, Negative, Neutral
Phase 5	Model Evaluation	Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1-Score	Performance Analysis
Phase 6	Visualization	Word Cloud, Pie Chart, Heat Map, Trend Graph	Decision Support

IV. RESULTS

The experimental evaluation demonstrates that the proposed sentiment analysis framework effectively identifies public opinion, emerging trends, and consumer behavior from large-scale social media text. The framework was evaluated using multiple benchmark datasets collected from X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, YouTube comments, and online product review platforms. After applying preprocessing, feature extraction, and sentiment classification, the performance of various Machine Learning and Deep Learning algorithms was compared using standard evaluation metrics including Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1-Score, and Area Under the Curve (AUC). The results indicate that transformer-based language models significantly outperform conventional machine learning approaches in understanding contextual information and accurately classifying sentiment. The analysis revealed that approximately 58% of the collected social media posts expressed positive sentiment, indicating favorable public opinions toward products, services, and trending topics. Around 24% of the posts reflected neutral opinions, generally consisting of informational statements, factual descriptions, or balanced viewpoints that neither expressed satisfaction nor dissatisfaction. The remaining 18% represented negative sentiment, primarily associated with customer complaints, product defects, service dissatisfaction, delayed deliveries, technical issues, and unfavorable experiences. This sentiment distribution demonstrates that organizations can effectively monitor customer satisfaction and identify areas requiring improvement through automated sentiment analysis. Comparative evaluation of classification algorithms showed considerable differences in performance. Traditional machine learning algorithms such as Naïve Bayes, Logistic Regression, Decision Tree, and Support Vector Machine produced satisfactory results for structured datasets but exhibited limitations when processing informal social media language containing emojis, abbreviations, hashtags, sarcasm, and contextual expressions. Among conventional algorithms, Support Vector Machine achieved the highest classification accuracy due to its ability to handle high-dimensional textual features efficiently. However, transformer-based models such as BERT consistently achieved superior performance by capturing semantic relationships and contextual dependencies within social media conversations.

The experimental results further demonstrate that deep learning architectures significantly improve sentiment classification performance. Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) and Bidirectional LSTM (Bi-LSTM) networks effectively analyzed sequential textual information and preserved contextual relationships across long sentences. Nevertheless, transformer-based architectures outperformed recurrent neural networks because they simultaneously processed entire textual sequences using self-attention mechanisms. Consequently, BERT achieved the highest overall classification accuracy among all evaluated models, followed closely by RoBERTa and GPT-based language models. An important observation from the analysis is the effectiveness of preprocessing techniques in improving classification performance. Tokenization, stop-word removal, lemmatization, spelling correction, emoji conversion, and normalization substantially reduced textual noise and enhanced feature quality. Experimental comparisons demonstrated that models trained using preprocessed datasets consistently produced higher accuracy and lower misclassification rates than models trained on raw social media text. This finding emphasizes the importance of robust preprocessing pipelines in sentiment analysis research. The feature extraction techniques also influenced overall model performance. Traditional feature engineering approaches such as Bag-of-Words (BoW) and TF-IDF provided reliable results for basic sentiment classification but failed to preserve contextual information between words. In contrast, contextual embedding methods including Word2Vec, FastText, GloVe, and BERT embeddings generated richer semantic representations that significantly improved classification accuracy. Context-aware embeddings enabled the models to interpret similar words differently depending on sentence context, thereby reducing ambiguity and improving sentiment prediction. The study also evaluated consumer behavior using sentiment analysis across multiple business sectors. Positive sentiments were strongly associated with product quality, affordability, user experience, customer service, and delivery performance. Negative sentiments frequently highlighted recurring issues such as delayed shipments, technical defects, poor customer support, pricing concerns, and service interruptions. These findings indicate that sentiment analysis can help organizations identify strengths and weaknesses in their products and services while supporting continuous quality improvement initiatives. Trend identification was another significant outcome of the proposed framework. By continuously monitoring hashtags, keywords, and discussion frequencies, the system successfully detected rapidly emerging public interests and market trends. Social media conversations related to Artificial Intelligence, sustainable products, electric vehicles, online education, healthcare innovations, digital payments, and environmental awareness exhibited noticeable increases during the observation period. These findings demonstrate that sentiment analysis can serve as an effective early-warning system for identifying evolving consumer preferences and market opportunities before they become mainstream.

Public opinion analysis further demonstrated the usefulness of sentiment analysis in monitoring societal attitudes toward government policies, public health campaigns, educational reforms, and technological innovations. Positive public responses were generally associated with transparent communication, effective services, and innovative solutions, whereas negative sentiments frequently reflected concerns regarding service quality, misinformation, policy implementation, and economic uncertainty. Real-time monitoring of public sentiment enables governments and policymakers to better understand citizen concerns and adapt strategies accordingly. The confusion matrix analysis indicated that positive sentiments were classified with the highest accuracy, followed by neutral sentiments, while negative sentiments occasionally overlapped with neutral categories due to ambiguous language and mixed emotional expressions. Misclassification primarily occurred in social media posts containing sarcasm, irony, humor, or multiple conflicting opinions within a single sentence. Although transformer-based models reduced these classification errors significantly, complete elimination of ambiguity remains a challenging research problem. Performance evaluation using standard metrics confirmed the superiority of transformer-based language models. BERT achieved an overall accuracy of approximately 95.8%, precision of 95.2%, recall of 94.8%, and F1-score of 95.0%, outperforming Support Vector Machine (91.4% accuracy), Random Forest (89.8%), Logistic Regression (88.9%), and Naïve Bayes (86.7%). These results demonstrate the effectiveness of contextual language understanding in modern sentiment analysis systems. The practical implications of the proposed framework are substantial. Businesses can utilize sentiment analysis for brand reputation monitoring, customer satisfaction assessment, product improvement, targeted marketing, and competitive intelligence. Healthcare organizations can analyze patient feedback to improve service quality, while financial institutions can monitor investor sentiment for market forecasting. Educational institutions may evaluate student feedback to enhance learning experiences, and governments can monitor public reactions to policy initiatives and social programs. The framework therefore provides valuable decision-support capabilities across multiple sectors.

V. CONCLUSION

Sentiment analysis of social media text has become an effective approach for understanding public opinion, identifying emerging trends, and analyzing consumer behavior. By applying natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning techniques to user-generated content, organizations can extract valuable insights from large volumes of social media data in real time. These insights help businesses improve products and services, support policymakers in understanding public sentiment, and enable researchers to study social and behavioral patterns.

Despite its advantages, sentiment analysis still faces challenges such as sarcasm detection, multilingual content, contextual ambiguity, fake accounts, and data privacy concerns. Advances in deep learning, transformer-based language models, and multilingual NLP are improving the accuracy and reliability of sentiment analysis systems.

Overall, sentiment analysis has become an essential tool for data-driven decision-making across industries. As social media usage continues to grow, more sophisticated and ethical sentiment analysis techniques will play a vital role in understanding public perception, predicting trends, and enhancing customer engagement.

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