QRBD

QUARTERLY REVIEW OF BUSINESS DISCIPLINES

October 2024

Volume 11
Number 1/2

QRBD - QUARTERLY REVIEW OF BUSINESS DISCIPLINES
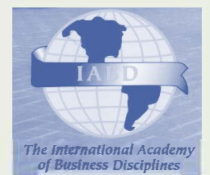
A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF BUSINESS DISCIPLINES

EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF BUSINESS DISCIPLINES

MISSION STATEMENT

The organization designated as the International Academy of Business Disciplines
is a worldwide, non-profit organization, established to foster and promote education
in all of the functional and support disciplines of business.

WWW.IABD.ORG

WWW.QRBD.NET

The Quarterly Review of Business Disciplines (QRBD) is listed in
Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities.

QRBD - QUARTERLY REVIEW OF BUSINESS DISCIPLINES

CONTENTS

REVIEWER FATIGUE: YOU CANNOT TURN A BLIND EYE

Vance Johnson Lewis, Oklahoma City University

We have all been there. We are sitting at our computers, blithefully working away on our next big publication, when all of the sudden….the inbox dings. Immediately thoughts turn to who it could be: a paper acceptance? a colleague wanting to meet for lunch? a student desperately needing help? With the unbounded excitement you switch tabs only to see:

The following paper has been submitted to XYZ Journal and
you have been identified as a possible reviewer.

Today more than ever, the field of business has become publish or perish. In the college of business, while historically only those blessed with a tenure track position were considered appropriate for and expected to provide peer reviewers, those who teach for a living now too are being called upon to publish in some form to maintain scholarly academic or practitioner status.

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, in 2022 there were approximately 100,000 college level business teachers in the US, a number expected to grow by roughly 8% by 2025. If we look at this in an oversimplified manner, presuming that everyone publishes two papers every five years, that is 40,000 papers going out for review every year. So for ever one of those papers, two reviewers are needed, calling for a grand total of 80,000 reviewers. Of course this is only accounting for researchers in The United States of America…but you get the picture.

While lists such as Cabells, UT-Dallas 24, and the Australian Business Deans Council all use different metrics to make statements about the quality of a journal, one thing remains constant: double blind reviews. These reviews serve as the standard bearers for quality and in many ways, the only manner in which researchers can get feedback on their papers. Rarely does an institution employ two people with identical research agendas and if they do, its likely they are collaborators; thus, by sending out the papers and providing one another with input, we are in a way exhibiting the only citizenship behaviors we can to our colleagues across institutions.

Much like fundraising fatigue, crisis fatigue, and Zoom fatigue, reviewer fatigue is a true problem in academia today. Not only does it call into question the quality of journals themselves, as the quality of the journal is only as good as the quality of the review, but also the timelines for the researchers. While many journals offer a six week turn around, I have seen firsthand it taking six weeks just to engage a reviewer…let alone get the review back!

But, I get it. As I write this essay, I have thirteen student papers to grade, five papers of my own to finish, a data set that needs cleaned, and an entirely separate journal with over twenty articles needing processed, let along the ones needing reviewers….and I almost forgot: I have a life outside of academia (in theory at least). I have no desire to review a paper today but I am going to fight through my reviewer fatigue and help.

Reviewer Fatigue is a real thing and the lack of credit we receive for doing it should be a topic for discussion at every annual review this year and in every accreditation meeting.

We should be commended for helping one another as well as sharing our own insights with those trying to add to the knowledge base. We should practice the golden rule and help others as we expect to help them and be rewarded for it.

So the next time your inbox dings and its that journal asking for a review, take a deep breath, get a coffee, and set aside an hour to help out your colleague. Or better still, reach out to your favorite journal now and offer your services to serve on the review board so that the editor knows ahead of time that they can count on your service.

EMOTIONAL LABOR AND PASSIVE DEEP ACTING: AN EXPLORATION OF EMOTIONAL LABOR EFFORTS OF OLDER WORKERS

L. Melita Prati, East Carolina University

Joy H. Karriker, East Carolina University

Kent K. Alipour, East Carolina University

ABSTRACT

This article compares age differences in the performance of emotional labor and related outcomes. We contend that younger individuals are more likely to engage in surface and active deep acting than older individuals. Accordingly, we explore whether the emotional expression of older individuals tends to be more authentic, presented in the form of passive deep acting, and we evaluate attitudinal outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment) related to these intervening emotional display efforts. While results did not show a positive association between age and the use of passive deep acting, findings did indicate that surface acting negatively affects job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and active deep acting positively affects organizational commitment. A discussion of future research to refine our understanding and measurement of passive deep acting and its implications for practice concludes the article.

INTRODUCTION

Much recent literature focuses on the effects of emotional labor in the workplace. Much of this literature concentrates on the negative consequences of the more contrived form of emotional labor, surface acting. Such consequences can include burnout, job dissatisfaction, and detrimental health effects (e.g., Grandey, 2000; Kim, 2008; Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Phillips et al., 2006; Zapf & Holz, 2006). In short, surface acting has repeatedly been demonstrated to be an antecedent to various undesirable workplace outcomes. In contrast, sans a few reports, active deep acting is not blatantly associated with negative workplace outcomes. In fact, active deep acting has been positively linked to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Yoon & Lawler, 2006).

One purpose of this research is to answer the call of emotional labor scholars to further explore passive deep acting as an emotional labor strategy. In comparison to active deep acting, passive deep acting (i.e., the authentic display of emotions in the workplace; e.g., Hochschild, 1983) has not been as prevalent in the emotion's literature (see Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Dahling & Perez, 2010; Diefendorff et al., 2005 for some notable exceptions). Scholars have expressed the need to explore the value of genuine emotions as an emotional labor strategy (e.g., Diefendorff et al., 2005). Thus, we attempt to reconcile the disparate literature on the adverse effects of emotional labor and explore a more positive account. In doing so, we simultaneously examine the effects of age, passive deep acting, active deep acting, and surface acting on individuals' work attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment) to provide a more complete and comprehensive view of age's impact on individuals' emotional labor behaviors and outcomes.

Responding to the call for studies to examine passive deep acting as a valuable emotional labor strategy, this study is important in that it investigates passive deep acting alongside the more well-known emotional labor strategies. Further, the study analyzes how one's age may affect the use of various emotional labor strategies and how these strategies may affect the outcomes of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, two common outcomes frequently studied in emotional labor research. Additionally, the study of age differences is pertinent due to the aging population of the workforce (Anderson & Morgan, 2017; Kim & Kang, 2017; Yaldiz et al., 2018). With age come changes in perceptions and purpose of work, and this study examines how such changes affect service work, specifically the use of emotional labor strategies and related outcomes.

This research attempts to answer the following questions. Question 1: Is passive deep acting a beneficial emotional labor strategy with positive attitudinal outcomes? Question 2: Does one's age play a role in one's choice of passive deep acting as an emotional labor strategy? Theoretically, this study has implications in the field of emotional labor. At this point, the results are mixed with regard to age and the use of passive deep acting or naturally felt emotions. This

study could add fodder to the argument that age does influence the use of passive deep acting as an emotional labor strategy with beneficial outcomes. Practically speaking, this study suggests that not all emotional labor strategies result in stress and other deleterious outcomes. It illustrates that emotional labor strategies can provide benefits such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and it is important to encourage such strategies for all employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conservation of Resources Theory

Promising and germane research to the present study comes from Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) literature (Bickerton & Miner, 2023; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Gorgievski & Hobfoll, 2008; Liu et al., 2008; Park et al., 2014; Wright & Hobfoll, 2004). Research on COR theory suggests that the emotional capital older adults accumulate may lead to beneficial outcomes such as increased work engagement, positive emotional regulation, and strong career identity (Kim & Kang, 2017). Further, this greater emotional capital can be attributed to the increased positive effects of more social interactions over time (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Gorgievski & Hobfoll, 2008; Liu et al., 2008; Witt et al., 2004; Wright & Hobfoll, 2004; Yaldiz et al., 2018), indicating that with aging comes a change in motivation regarding social interactions. Because older workers focus on enjoying their remaining time, they are more cognizant of the importance of positive social interactions. Kim and Kang (2017) argue that older individuals maintain a more positive emotional state and place more importance on emotional regulation because of their life orientation. As such, we contend that older adults may have more emotional capital in accumulated resource reserves than younger individuals.

Notably, the primary doctrine of COR theory indicates that individuals have innate and learned motivations "to create, foster, conserve, and protect the quality and quantity of their resources" (Gorgievski & Hobfoll, 2008, p. 2). Yaldiz et al. (2018) argue that these motivations and types of resources change over time. Kim and Kang (2017) describe emotional resources as resources that are of primary importance to older workers. Emotional resources are clearly demonstrated elsewhere in the literature to be valuable to individuals both intrinsically and as a means to accumulate other resources (Liu et al., 2008). Park et al. (2014) describe passive deep acting as naturally felt emotions, a form of emotional labor requiring the investment of fewer resources that could be used as a strategy to preserve and gain emotional resources. As such, passive deep acting can be an emotional labor strategy used by older workers to protect and garner resources.

In comparison, younger adults may be more likely to be resource-poor and thus experience undesirable outcomes including psychological unrest or dissonance, low levels of job performance, and burnout (Gorgievski & Hobfoll, 2008). The life orientation of younger workers influences their pursuit of opportunity and advancement. Social interactions in this context are a

means toward material rewards (Yaldiz et al., 2018). Relatedly, Brotheridge and Lee (2002) argue that emotional labor efforts may present a potential expenditure of one's personal resources in the area of service work. Moreover, this expenditure of personal resources is ascribed more to surface acting than active deep acting or passive deep acting. We argue that these effects are associated with higher levels of surface acting among younger adults.

Emotional Labor Efforts

Being required to modulate the expression of one's emotions in organizationally specific ways is a significant component of many people's occupations and has been referred to as *emotional labor* (Hochschild, 1983). However, this definition is too narrow and limited in scope for the present study because it suggests one must modify internal emotions to perform according to organizational requirements of emotional display. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) referenced this problem, stating that the definition does not provide for authentic expressions of emotion, which may fulfill emotional display requirements when expressed.

Broadening the description of emotional labor to include genuine efforts, known as passive deep acting, provides a comprehensive view of the requirements and concordant practice's impact. An example of passive deep acting would be a retail salesperson who genuinely, without a conscious effort, enjoys assisting a customer in selecting the perfect accessory (Hochschild, 1983). Accordingly, this study examines three types of emotional labor efforts and considers the age of those performing acts of emotional labor. Unlike passive deep acting, the other two types, surface acting and active deep acting, require the one engaged in emotional work to regulate their emotional being (visually and/or internally) to fulfill organizational requirements. Surface acting is simply manipulating one's outward emotional display, as might occur when a customer service representative responds to a belligerent customer with a smile and pleasant tone, even though the representative feels resentful or defensive. By contrast, active deep acting requires cognitive manipulation of the emotional self so the individual can feel the emotion required. An example of active deep acting is a flight attendant who assists the parents of a wailing child patiently and pleasantly by choosing to feel compassion despite initial annoyance. As such, active deep acting is the more genuine or authentic of these two displays of emotional labor. Be this as it may, in both cases, there is a point in acting when individuals experience dissonance because their feelings are not expressed.

Emotional dissonance is the disconnect from one's true feelings or emotions. This situation is considered by many to be a consequence of the fulfillment of display rules: "Emotional display rules refer to norms about appropriate emotional expression for specific situations" (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000, p. 63). Many authors have suggested that emotional display rules include some level of emotive dissonance (e.g., Kim, 2008; Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Phillips et al., 2006). However, some argue that this is not always the case.

Several researchers have expressed that emotional dissonance is not a foregone conclusion or influential factor in all emotional labor situations, arguing there are situations where employees feel the emotion being displayed (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983; Morris & Feldman, 1996). Hochschild (1983) proposed this idea as a form of deep acting in her seminal piece on emotional labor. She described two types of deep acting: passive and active. She referred to passive deep acting as the situation where the employee already feels the desired emotion and no cognitive manipulation of emotion is necessary. Consistent with this line of thinking, we consider passive deep acting to be tied to perceived behavioral expectations with no resulting emotional dissonance.

A thorough search of the literature yields a few studies on passive deep acting, and fewer still consider the role of age differences in the use of emotional labor strategies. In one rare study by Dahling and Perez (2010), age was positively related to expressing naturally felt emotions. Other works mention passive deep acting as an emotional labor activity, and one study explored emotions in teaching (Zhang & Zhu, 2008). In this case, burnout and job satisfaction in Chinese higher education are investigated as consequences of surface, active deep, and passive deep acting. The authors found positive surface-acting burnout and links to surface-acting job dissatisfaction, but interestingly, they did not find authenticity to be a predictor of burnout or job dissatisfaction (Zhang & Zhu, 2008).

Cheung and Tang (2010) provide another study focusing on the age-passive deep-acting relationship, including an evaluation of how emotional labor strategies mediate the relationship between age and job outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction and psychological distress). The researchers found a positive relationship between naturally felt emotions and job satisfaction and a negative relationship between naturally felt emotions and psychological distress. Regarding age, they found that older employees tend to use active, deep-acting, and naturally felt emotions as emotional labor strategies.

Indeed, the literature suggests passive deep acting is a valid form of emotional labor that fulfills display rules when utilized. For instance, a study by Glomb and Tews (2004) attests that it may be an effective and beneficial form of emotional labor. In cases where passive deep acting is employed, one experiences the opposite of emotional dissonance (i.e., emotional harmony), such that one's emotions and behaviors are concordant with display rules. Consequently, such situations may desirably impact individuals' job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The Influence of Age on Emotional Labor

Several writings focus on the effects of age and emotion. While most of them provide only a brief explanation of passive deep acting, we delve into these findings to provide context for the present study. In essence, the research reveals that older adults cope better with emotional stress, exhibit more positive emotional efference, and maintain a more balanced emotional condition than younger adults (Charles & Piazza, 2007; Johnson, Machowski, Holdsworth, Kern, & Zapf, 2017). Moreover, older adults are better equipped to navigate complex emotional contexts (Sheldon, Ryan, Rothstorne & Ilardi, 1997) and creatively solve problems (Sheldon et al., 1997). Further unpacking these research results, older adults are found to experience negative emotions less frequently than younger adults, sustain positive emotional states for longer durations, and have fewer instances of negative emotional efference (Carstensen & Charles, 1998). Additionally, older workers are often characterized by emotions such as contentment, calm, and ease (Ross & Mirowsky, 2008).

As mentioned by Witt and colleagues, "the accumulation of experiences and skills an individual gains as they age affects the manner in which they interpret and react to stimuli in their environment." (2004, p. 41). As such, older workers may have a substantially different way of experiencing and managing emotions in the workplace compared to their younger counterparts. In other words, increased experience, over time, may contribute to more emotional resources as workers age. It is well established that older adults deal with emotional issues in a more balanced manner. Taken together, we contend that passive deep acting should notably apply to adults as they age.

> *Hypothesis 1: Age will be positively associated with passive deep acting (i.e., as age increases, passive deep acting will tend to increase).*

Younger adults perform emotional labor tasks through surface acting and active deep acting for a plethora of reasons. Pointed among these are fewer emotional resources, less familiarity dealing with emotional behavior at work, higher emotional investment in cognitive performance, lower levels of emotional reasoning, and less saliency of emotional experience (Blanchard-Fields, 1986; Chow et al., 2007; Hur et al., 2014). The less familiarity one has in dealing with emotional behavior in the workplace, the more likely one will use surface acting and active deep acting as emotional labor strategies (Ross & Mirowsky, 2008). COR theory informs this supposition that younger individuals lack the resources to deal with emotional behavior in the workplace.

Additionally, in emotionally charged situations, younger adults may respond differently than older adults due to the importance of job investment. As stated by Chow et al., "Compared with older

adults, younger adults (appear) to be more emotionally invested in their cognitive performance" (2007, p. 778). At the earlier stages of a career, younger adults may experience a pressure to excel, a desire to conform, and the drive to prove their independence and maturity (Castro et al., 2006). Pertinently, the conspicuous desire to express emotion in conformity with display rule norms may play an active role in shaping their workplace behaviors. Whereas older adults will take a passive stance in emotionally striking situations, younger adults may adopt a more proactive stance (Blanchard-Fields et al., 2004). This proactive stance involves the conscious manipulation of emotion to meet display rule demands. In other words, the pressure to succeed in their job may motivate younger adults to surface and actively deep act. Under the doctrine of COR theory, the conscious manipulation of emotions to meet display rule demands is based on a lack of resources to cope with the mature level of emotional interaction necessary to deal with display rules sans emotional dissonance. Thus, we suggest the following two hypotheses regarding age-related emotional labor behaviors:

> *Hypothesis 2: Age will be negatively associated with surface acting (i.e., as age increases, surface acting will tend to decrease).*

> *Hypothesis 3: Age will be negatively associated with active deep acting (i.e., as age increases, active deep acting will tend to decrease).*

The Impact of Age and Emotional Labor on Individuals' Work-related Attitudes

There are positive attitudinal outcomes associated with age and emotional labor efforts. First, we turn our attention to individuals' job satisfaction. More specifically, the level of job satisfaction will likely be influenced by individuals' emotional labor efforts. Further, research has found that age impacts individuals' perceptions of their job role and satisfaction (Kalleberg & Loscocco, 1983; Zeitz, 1990). As stated by Kalleberg and Loscocco, "The basic and most consistent finding in research on age differences in job satisfaction is that older workers are more satisfied with their jobs than are younger workers" (1983, p. 78). Thus, the following was predicted:

> *Hypothesis 4: Age will be positively associated with job satisfaction (i.e., as age increases, job satisfaction will tend to increase).*

Surface acting, the most inauthentic of the three discussed figurations of emotional labor, is not likely to promote job satisfaction. Whereas authenticity is unequivocally connected with personal well-being and role-specific satisfaction, the opposite is true of surface acting, which lacks consistency between feelings and outward display (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Relatedly, the social withdrawal inherent in surface acting suggests a lack of personal well-being tied to job demands (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Therefore, we posit the following:

Hypothesis 5: Surface acting will be negatively associated with job satisfaction.

However, we contend that because active deep acting is more genuine behavior (i.e., aligned with one's feelings), it should be more likely to promote job satisfaction. In some studies, active deep acting is positively related to job satisfaction (Kim, 2008; Martinez-Inigo et al., 2007; Yang & Chang, 2008). Consistent with this rationale, Steinberg and Figart (1999) postulate that the various configurations of emotional labor do not impact job satisfaction in a like manner. In line with this thinking, we propose that active deep acting has a substantially different impact on job satisfaction than surface acting.

Hypothesis 6: Active deep acting will be positively associated with job satisfaction.

Although research provides few examples of the impact of naturally felt emotions on job satisfaction, we contend that passive deep acting will also enhance individuals' job satisfaction. The skills older adults bring to jobs, acquired through experiences, may result in an accommodation process through which older adults learn to appreciate the intrinsic satisfactions of the job (Zeitz, 1990). In past studies, job satisfaction has been tied to the intrinsic rewards of work, such as one's enjoyment in fulfilling job requirements (Janson & Martin, 1982). In short, older adults perceived enrichment through intrinsic rewards as being conducive to increased job satisfaction (Zeitz, 1990).

Hypothesis 7: Passive deep acting will be positively associated with job satisfaction.

Second, we highlight the role of age and emotional labor in individuals' organizational commitment. Notably, Yang & Chang (2008) found surface acting negatively related to organizational commitment. We propose several reasons this may be the case. Younger adults, who exhibit increased levels of surface acting compared to older adults, may be more likely to leave an organization if they find the job requirements, like display rules and organizational regulations, inappropriate or undesirable (Cohen, 1993). In addition, younger adults are more liable to leave an organization if they cannot acquire a skill set conducive to their career ambitions (Finegold et al., 2002). Surface acting and its consequent emotive dissonance and stress may promote increased fatigue, apathy, and emotional exhaustion, which have been linked to lower levels of affective organizational commitment (Leiter & Maslach, 1988).

Hypothesis 8: Surface acting will be negatively associated with organizational commitment.

Contrary to the previous assertion, we tender active deep acting and passive deep acting will have the opposite relationship with affective organizational commitment. The cognitive

manipulation inherent in active deep acting is conducive to an entirely different emotive state and display of emotion in the workplace than surface acting. Such efforts, as aforementioned, put the actor in the position of relating to the other in the interaction. As such, emotional exchanges utilizing active deep acting tend to be both more successful at achieving their aims and more positive at the same time. Successful emotional exchanges, such as those rendered through active deep acting, result in higher rates of affective organizational commitment in the workplace (Yoon & Lawler, 2006). In addition, by employing the display of positive emotion through active or passive deep acting, emotional exchanges result in higher rates of affective organizational commitment in the workplace (Yoon & Lawler, 2006).

We argue the same relationship that we postulate active deep acting holds among those who demonstrate passive deep acting in the workplace. The same above cited two arguments apply to the situation of passive deep acting. Passive deep actors are both more positive and more successful in their social interactions. Moreover, the positive emotions displayed by both passive and active deep actors result in decreased intention to turnover jobs (Coté & Morgan, 2002). As such, from the evidence presented, affective organizational commitment would seem to be higher among both active deep actors and passive deep actors.

Hypothesis 9: Active deep acting will be positively associated with organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 10: Passive deep acting will be positively associated with organizational commitment.

A number of authors find a positive relationship between advanced age and satisfaction with one's work role (Busch & Bush, 1979; Cheung & Tang, 2010; Lee & Wilbur, 1985; Smith & Hoy, 1992). Age, as such, is definitively a factor in the magnitude of one's attachment to the organization. Regardless of the reasons for this increased affective organizational commitment, we can assert categorically that age is positively related to organizational commitment. A few studies corroborate this (e.g., Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007; Gellatly, 1995; Smith & Hoy, 1992). Those advanced in age, passive deep actors, show a strong positive correlation with affective organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 11: Age will be positively associated with organizational commitment (i.e., as age increases, organizational commitment will tend to increase).

METHOD

Sample

Employees from 29 stores of a retail bookstore chain were surveyed. A total of 550 employees and managers received survey materials, and 244 employees provided complete and usable data (40% response rate). All stores were located in the southeastern quadrant of the United States, and the stores were located in both urban and rural areas. The sample was primarily female (68.4%) and white (80.2%), with 7.4% African American, 1.2% Asian, 5.8% Hispanic, and 5.3% who regarded themselves as multicultural. Ages ranged from 18 to 78 years, with an average age of 31.3. The average tenure with the organization was 2 years, ranging between 1 month and 30 years. 52.8% of participants reported earning a college degree or higher. The Human Resources Director reported the characteristics of survey respondents as representative of the organization's demographics, indicating a lack of response bias.

Managerial staff, who represented 26.2% of the sample, were included in the data because their duties were similar to those of regular sales associates. All of these associates were responsible for front-line customer service. Their primary duties included helping customers locate, order, and/or purchase books, magazines, and other printed media. Some employees were also responsible for duties related to the operation of the in-store coffee shop, which also had similar emotional labor requirements.

Measures

Surface acting. Grandey's (2003) five-item scale was used to measure surface acting. Survey respondents were asked to report how they portrayed organizationally required emotions during customer service interactions. A 5-point Likert scale was used, with item responses ranging from "never" to "always," indicating how often the respondent performed specific actions. Items were "Just pretend to have emotions I need to display for my job," "Put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way," "Put on a mask in order to express the right emotions for the job," "Fake a good mood when interacting with customers," and "Put on a 'show' or 'performance' when interacting with customers." The data yielded a scale reliability of $\alpha = .88$.

Active deep acting. Active deep acting was measured using two questions sculpted by Brotheridge and Lee (2002). These items were "I made an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others" and "I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show." Another question by Grandey (1999) was added to the scale. This item states, "I really try to feel the emotions I have to show as a part of my job." A 5-point Likert scale was used, with item responses ranging from "never" to "always," indicating how often the respondent performed specific actions. The data yielded a scale reliability of $\alpha = .92$.

Passive deep acting. Passive deep acting was measured using the three-item scale developed by Prati (2004). These items were: "I experience the emotions I am required to express on the job," "I don't need to pretend to have the emotions that I am required to express at work," and "I feel emotions similar to those I am required to express at work." A 5-point Likert scale was used, with item responses ranging from "never" to "always," indicating how often the respondent performed specific actions. The data yielded a scale reliability of α = .62.

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using the three-item scale by Michigan Organizational Assessment (Cammann et al., 1983). A 5-point Likert scale was used, with item responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Items included "All in all, I am satisfied with my job," "In general, I like working here," and "In general, I don't like my job." The data yielded a scale reliability of α = .89.

Affective Organizational Commitment. *Affective* Organizational Commitment was measured using the five-item Affective Organizational Commitment scale developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). A 5-point Likert scale was used, with item responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Items included "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization," "This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me," "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own," "I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization," and "I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization." The data yielded a scale reliability of α = .84.

RESULTS

Table 1

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for the present study's variables.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1 Age	31.29	13.32	..				
2 Surface Acting	2.17	0.82	-.25**	..			
3 Deep Acting - Active	3.02	1.22	-.20**	-.05	..		
4 Deep Acting - Passive	3.24	0.89	.03	-.40**	.42**	..	
5 Job Satisfaction	4.04	0.79	.29**	-.43**	.17**	.34**	..
6 Organizational Commitment	3.20	0.81	.22**	-.44**	.19**	.35**	.67**

Note: N = 244. *$p <.05$. **$p <.01$ (two-tailed)

Preliminary and Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Table 1 highlights descriptive statistics and correlations for the present study. In preliminary support of our predictions, age was negatively associated with both surface acting ($r = -.25$, $p < .01$) and active deep acting ($r = -.20$, $p < .01$), and positively associated with both job satisfaction ($r = .29$, $p < .01$) and organizational commitment ($r = .22$, $p < .01$). Further, surface acting was negatively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = -.43$, $p < .01$) and organizational commitment ($r = -.44$, $p < .01$). Deep acting was positively related to job satisfaction (active: $r = .17$, $p < .01$; passive: $r = .34$, $p < .01$) and organizational commitment (active: $r = .19$, $p < .01$; passive: $r = .35$, $p < .01$).

Figure 1. The present study's model. Standardized estimates of the path coefficients are provided. $N = 244$. $^{*}p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$ (two-tailed).
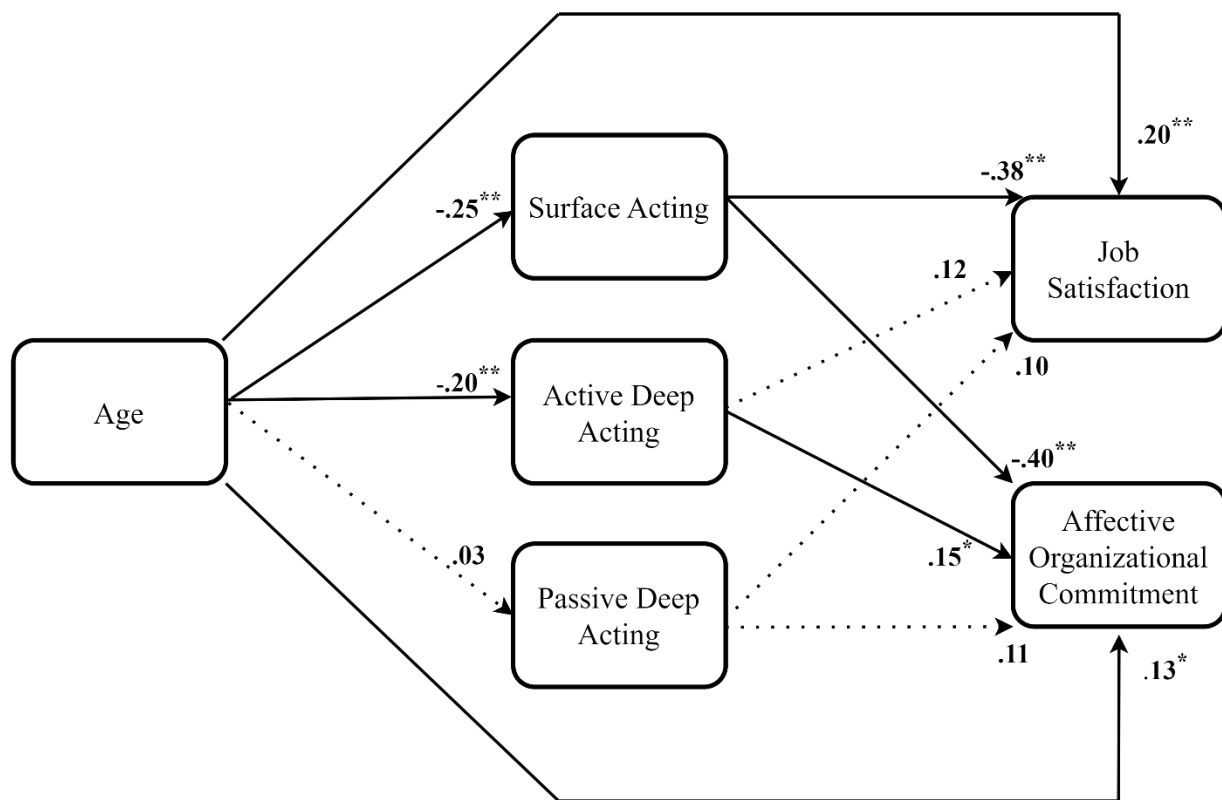
Confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess the proposed five-factor structure of the measurement model. Specifically, fit indices and Chi-square difference tests were used to determine if the measurement model fit the data appropriately. Surface acting, active deep acting,

passive deep acting, job satisfaction, and affective organizational commitment were expected to load on separate factors. In other words, the five-factor model was expected to provide the best fit to the data compared to alternative models. Notably, results demonstrated that the expected five-factor measurement model fit the data reasonably well ($\chi2$ (N = 244; df = 160) = 385.38, SRMR = .05, CFI = .92). The model was then compared to an alternative unidimensional model in which all self-report measures were combined. The one-factor model did not fit the data well ($\chi2$ (N = 244; df = 170) = 1528.67, SRMR = .14, CFI = .49) and had a significantly worse fit than the hypothesized model ($\Delta\chi2$ (N = 244; Δdf = 10) = 1143.29, p < .001). An alternative four-factor model combining job satisfaction and organizational commitment (r = .67) into a single factor was also assessed. This four-factor ($\chi2$ (N = 244; df = 164) = 504.87, SRMR = .06, CFI = .87) model did not fit the data particularly well and also had a significantly worse fit than the original hypothesized model ($\Delta\chi2$ (N = 244; Δdf = 4) = 205.04, p < .001).

Nested Data

Employees were nested within retail stores, so ICC(1) values were calculated. This provided an effect size estimate concerning the variance in our outcome variables attributable to retail store membership (i.e., it provides a value indicating the extent to which independence assumptions are violated). Notably, although ICC(1) values were .00 for surface acting, active deep acting, passive deep acting, and job satisfaction, the ICC(1) value for organizational commitment was .03. In other words, 3% of the variance in organizational commitment was attributable to the retail store location in which employees were working (LeBreton & Senter, 2008).

Given the evidence of retail store locations' effects on organizational commitment scores (i.e., the assumption of independence was violated), multilevel modeling was necessary, and predictors were grand-mean centered (Hoffman & Gavin, 1998). This allowed for the estimation of level 1 (individual employee) effects while accounting for level 2 (retail store) effects (e.g., Alipour, Mohammed, & Raghuram, 2018). Specifically, hypotheses were assessed via multilevel path analysis in MPLUS 8, using maximum likelihood estimation. Because we did not hypothesize that relationships would significantly differ based on retail store membership, intercepts were allowed to vary across subsections. However, slopes were fixed for testing all level 1 (individual employee) relationships.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1 predicted that age would be positively related to passive deep acting. This prediction was not supported. Inconsistent with our expectations, we found that as employees' age increased, the display of passive deep acting did not tend to increase (unstandardized estimate = .00, SE = .00, p > .05).

Hypothesis 2 proposed that age would be negatively related to surface acting. This prediction was supported. As employees' age increased, surface acting decreased (unstandardized estimate = -.02, SE = .00, p < .001).

As Hypothesis 3, we expected that age would be negatively related to active deep acting. Results provided support for this prediction. As employees' age increased, active deep acting generally decreased (unstandardized estimate = -.02, SE = -.01, p < .01).

Hypothesis 4, which states that age is positively related to job satisfaction, was supported. As employees' age increased, job satisfaction increased (unstandardized estimate = .01, SE = .00, p < .001).

As per the prediction of Hypothesis 5, surface acting was expected to be negatively related to job satisfaction. Results were supportive of this assumption. As employees' surface acting increased, job satisfaction decreased (unstandardized estimate = -.36, SE = .06, p < .001).

Hypothesis 6 posited that active deep acting would be positively related to job satisfaction. This prediction was not supported. As employees' active deep acting increased, their job satisfaction did not tend to increase (unstandardized estimate = .08, SE = .04, p = .06).

Hypothesis 7 proposed that passive deep acting would be positively associated with job satisfaction. Our findings did not substantiate this prediction. As workers' passive deep acting increased, their job satisfaction did not generally increase (unstandardized estimate = .09, SE = .06, p = .15).

Hypothesis 8 predicted that surface acting would be negatively related to affective organizational commitment. Results confirmed this prediction. For example, as employees' surface acting increased, their organizational commitment decreased (unstandardized estimate = -.37, SE = .06, p < .001).

Hypothesis 9 posited that active deep acting would be positively related to organizational commitment. This hypothesis was supported. As workers' active deep acting increased, their organizational commitment generally increased (unstandardized estimate = .09, SE = .04, p < .05)

Hypothesis 10 proposed that passive deep acting would be positively related to affective organizational commitment. Results were not supportive of this expectation. As employees' passive deep acting increased, their affective organizational commitment did not tend to increase (unstandardized estimate = .10, SE = .06, p = .11)

Lastly, Hypothesis 11, which predicted that age would be positively related to organizational commitment, was supported. As workers' age increased, organizational commitment generally increased (unstandardized estimate = .01, SE = .00, p < .05). Standardized coefficient estimates for the hypothesized model are presented in Figure 1.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of age on both proximal (i.e., surface acting, active deep acting, passive deep acting) and distal (i.e., job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment) outcomes. We proposed that younger individuals would be more likely to surface act and active deep act and that older individuals would be more likely to passive deep act. We found that younger adults strongly associate surface acting with active deep acting. However, the evidence did not suggest that older adults display an association with passive deep acting. We found that younger employees are more likely to surface and deep act, yet our efforts did not reveal conditions under which emotional labor types are strengthened or weakened as age increases. It is likely that moderators and additional mechanisms explaining these relationships exist and are not captured in our model.

Relatedly, the evidence failed to support passive deep acting as a predictor of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The lack of support for these expectations is interesting and likely relates to the need for further measurement clarity for the passive deep-acting construct. However, our investigation of the relationships between age and other forms of acting (i.e., surface acting, active deep acting) and age and work-related attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment) was fruitful. Findings indicate that older employees have higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment levels than younger workers. This result suggests a temporal component worthy of further study. That is, older workers have had time to explore and find (or craft) satisfying jobs and develop exchange relationships with organizations, resulting in heightened organizational commitment. Perhaps, at some point, older employees' labor is emotionally promoted, and this labor eventually promotes passive deep acting, such that our proposed model might be improved with a longitudinal approach that examines changes in passive deep acting over time.

Additionally, although surface acting had a negative effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, active deep acting elicited positive effects. Thus, we understand that younger workers experience decreased levels of job satisfaction, and as surface acting increases, job satisfaction tends to decrease. Consistent with COR theory, younger workers may experience emotional dissonance, contributing to unhappiness and lack of commitment to their jobs.

This study contributes to practice in that it suggests the need to support younger workers in their efforts to perform emotional labor in accordance with emotional display rules. Organizations

would do well to offer developmental programming that helps younger workers identify areas of emotional dissonance that may contribute to their stress and burnout. When irreconcilable, this dissonance may indicate an employee will be happier and healthier in another job; however, where a heightened understanding of the rationale for display rules may alleviate this dissonance, younger workers may experience enhanced emotional resources.

Limitations and Future Directions

The lack of support for age as a positive predictor of passive deep acting was unexpected, especially given that age was found to be negatively associated with both surface acting and active deep acting. It begs the question of whether passive deep acting, given the authenticity of emotions displayed, is actually emotional labor at all. Perhaps, as operationalized in this effort, it simply represents non-acting. Possibly, the process of internalizing emotional display norms is so closely tied to understanding/knowledge of display rules that the result is a lack of complete distinction between the deep acting constructs, as we note active deep acting and passive deep acting are positively correlated (.42). This finding suggests the potential for some construct overlap. That is, an emotionally intelligent individual may rather seamlessly interpret and internalize emotional display rules. The "acting" that occurs is, then, a result of both an understanding of and agreement with the display rules. As such, perhaps passive deep acting did not significantly impact this effort because it is not entirely distinguishable from active deep acting as measured.

Moreover, this lack of statistical support could be due, in part, to the low reliability of the passive deep acting scale. However, given the low reliability of our passive deep acting measure, we acknowledge that the inferences that can be made from Hypotheses 7 and 10 are limited. We argue that a reliable scale to measure passive deep acting is urgently needed to advance research on emotional labor. Also, the hypotheses were tested using a relatively homogenous sample from cross-sectional survey data. Thus, future research could benefit from both the improvement of existing measures and the inclusion of more diverse samples.

REFERENCES

Alipour, K. K., Mohammed, S., & Raghuram, S. (2018). Differences in the valuing of power among team members: A contingency approach toward examining the effects of power values diversity and relationship conflict. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *33*, 231-247.

Anderson, L. B., Morgan, M. (2017). Embracing the opportunities of an older workforce: Identifying the age-based strategies for coping with emotional labor. *Work, Aging, and Retirement, 3*(4), 403-414.

Ashforth, B. E. & Humphrey, R. H. (1993). Emotional labor in service roles: The influence of identity. *Academy of Management Review*, *18*(1), 88-115.

Bickerton, G. R. & Miner, M. (2023). Conservation of resources theory and spirituality at work: When a resource is not always a resource. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 15*(2), 241-250.

Blanchard-Fields, F. (1986). Reasoning on social dilemmas varying in emotional saliency: An adult developmental perspective. *Psychology and Aging*, *1*(4), 325-333.

Blanchard-Fields, F., Stein, R. & Watson, T. L. (2004). Age differences in emotion – regulation strategies in handling everyday problems. *Journal of Gerontology, 59*(6), 261-269.

Brotheridge, C. M. & Lee, R. T. (2002). Testing a conservation of resources model of the dynamics of emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 7*(1), 57-67.

Brotheridge, C. M. & Lee, R. T. (2003). Development and validation of the emotional labor scale. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 76*, 365-379.

Bush, R. & Busch, P. (1982). The relationship of tenure and age to role clarity and its consequences in the industrial salesforce. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *2*(1), 17-23.

Cammann, C., Fichman, M., Jenkins, G. D., & Klesh, J. (1983). Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire. In S. E. Seashore, E. E. Lawler, P. H. Mirvis, & C. Cammann (Eds.), Assessing organizational change: A guide to methods, measures, and practices (pp. 71–138). New York: Wiley-Interscience.

Carstensen, L. L. & Charles S. T. (1998). Emotion in the second half of life. *American Psychological Society*, *7*(5), 144-149.

Charles, S. T. & Piazza J. R. (2007). Memories of social interactions: Age differences in emotional intensity. *Psychology and Aging*, *22*(2), 300-309.

Chow, S., Hamagami, F. & Nesselroade, J. R. (2007). Age differences in dynamical cognition linkages. *Psychology and Aging, 22*(4), 765-780.

Cheung, F. Y. & Tang, C. S. (2010). Effects of age, gender, and emotional labor strategies on job outcomes: Moderated mediation analyses. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, *2*(3), 323-339.

Cohen, A. (1993). Age and tenure in relation to organizational commitment: A meta-analysis. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *14*(2), 143-159.

Collishaw, M. A., Dyer, L. & Boies, K. (2008). The authenticity of positive emotional displays: Client responses to leisure service employees. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *40*(1), 23-46.

Coté, S. & Morgan, L. M. (2002). A longitudinal analysis of the association between emotion regulation, job satisfaction, and intentions to quit. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *23*, 947-962.

Dahling, J. J. & Perez, L. A. (2010). Older worker, different actor? Linking age and emotional labor strategies. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *48*(5), 574-578.

Diefendorff, J. M. & Croyle, M. H. & Gosserand, R. H. (2005). The dimensionality and antecedents of emotional labor strategies. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *66*(2): 339-357.

Erickson, R. J. & Grove, W. J. C. (2007). Why emotions matter: Age, agitation, and burnout among registered nurses. *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, *6*(1), 1-30.

Finegold, D., Mohrman, S. & Spreitzer, G. M. (2002). Age effects on the predictors of technical workers' commitment and willingness to turnover. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *23*(5), 655-674.

Gellatly, I. R. (1995). Individual and group determinants of employee absenteeism: test of a causal model. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *16*(5), 460-476.

Glomb, T. M. & Tews M. J. (2004). Emotional labor: A conceptualization and scale development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *64*(1), 1-23.

Grandey, A. A. (1999). The effects of emotional labor: Employee attitudes, stress and performance. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Colorado State University.

Grandey, A. A. (2000). Emotion regulation in the workplace: A new way to conceptualize emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *5*(1), 95-110.

Grandey, A. A. (2003). When "the show must go on": Surface acting and deep acting as determinants of emotional exhaustion and peer-rated service delivery. *Academy of Management Journal*, *46*(1), 86-96.

Hochschild, A. R. (1983). The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Hoffman, D., & Gavin, M. (1998). Centering decisions in hierarchical linear models: Theoretical and methodological implications for organizational science. *Journal of Management*, *24*, 623-641.

Hur, W., Moon, T. & Han, S. (2014). The role of chronological age and work experience on emotional labor: The mediating effect of emotional intelligence. *Career Development International*, *19*(7), 734-754.

Janson, P. & Martin, J. K. (1982). Job satisfaction and age: A test of two views. *Social Forces*, *60*(4), 1089-1102.

Johnson, S. J., Machowski, S., Holdsworth, L., Kern, M. & Zapf, D. (2017). Age, emotion regulation strategies, burnout, and engagement in the service sector: Advantages of older workers. *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *33*, 205-216.

Kalleberg, A. L. & Losocco, K. A. (1983). Aging, values, and rewards: Explaining age differences in job satisfaction. *American Sociological Review*, *48*(1), 78-90.

Kim, H. J. (2008). Hotel service provider's emotional labor: The antecedents and effects on burnout. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *27*(2), 151-161.

Kim, N. & Kang, S. (2017). Older and more engaged: The mediating role of age-linked resources on work engagement. *Human Resource Management: Advancing Human Resource Research and Practice, 56*(5), 731-746.

Larson, E. & Yao, X. (2005). Clinical empathy as emotional labor in the patient-physician relationship. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *293*(9), 1100-1106.

LeBreton, J. M., & Senter, J. L. (2008). Answers to 20 questions about interrater reliability and interrater agreement. *Organizational Research Methods*, *11*(4), 815-852.

Lee, R. & Wilbur, E. R. (1985). Age, education, job tenure, salary, job characteristics, and job satisfaction: A multivariate analysis. *Human Relations*, *38*(8), 781-791.

Leiter, M. P. & Maslach, C. (1988). The impact of interpersonal environment on burnout and organizational commitment. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *9*(4), 297-308.

Lewig, K.A. & Dollard M.F. (2003). Emotional dissonance, emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction in call centre workers. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *12*(4), 366-392.

Liu, Y., Prati, L. M., Perrewé, P. & Ferris, G. (2008). The relationship between emotional resources and emotional labor: An exploratory study. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *38*(10), 2410-2439.

Martinez-Ingo, D., Totterdell, P., Alcover, C. M. & Holman, D. (2007). Emotional labour and emotional exhaustion: Interpersonal and intrapersonal mechanisms. *Work and Stress*, *21*(1), 30-47.

Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J. & Smith, C. A. (1993). Commitment to organizations and occupations: Extension and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *78*(4), 538-551.

Mirowsky, J., & Ross, C. E. (1992). Age and depression. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 33*(3), 187–205.

Morris, A. J. & Feldman, D. C. (1996). The dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labor. *The Academy of Management Review*, *21*(4), 986-1010.

Park, H. I., O'Rourke, E. & O'Brien, K. E. (2014). Extending conservation of resources theory: The interaction between emotional labor and interpersonal influence. *International Journal of Stress Management, 21*(4), 384-405.

Phillips, B., Tan, T. T. W. & Julian, C. (2006). The theoretical underpinnings of emotional dissonance: A framework and analysis of propositions. *Journal of Services of Marketing*, *20*(7), 471-478.

Prati, L. M. (2004). Emotional intelligence as a facilitator of the emotional labor process. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Florida State University.

Ross, C. E. & Mirowsky, J. (2008). Age and the balance of emotions. *Social Science and Medicine*, *66*(12), 2391-2400.

Schaubroeck, J. & Jones, J. R. (2000). Antecedents of workplace emotional labor dimensions And moderators of their effects on physical symptoms. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *21*, 163-183.

Sheldon, K. M., Ryan, R. M., Rawsthorne, L. J. & Ilardi, B. (1997). Trait self and true self: Cross-role variation in the big-five personality traits and its relation with psychological authenticity and subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*(6), 1380-1393.

Smith, P. L. & Hoy, F. (1992). Job satisfaction and commitment of older workers in small business. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *30*(4), 106-118.

Steinberg, R. J. & Figart, D. M. (1999). Emotional labor since the managed heart. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *561*, 8-26.

Witt, L. A., Treadway, D. C. & Ferris, G. R. (2004). The role of age in reactions to organizational politics perceptions. *Organizational Analysis*, *12*(1), 39-52.

Wright, T. A. & Hobfoll, S. E. (2004). Commitment, psychological well-being and job

p
erformance: An examination of conservation of resources (COR) theory and job burnout. *Journal of Business and Management*, *9*(4), 389-406.

Yaldiz, L. M., Truxillo, D. M., Bodner, T. & Hammer, L. B. (2018). Do resources matter for employee stress? It depends on how old you are. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 107,* 182-194.

Yang, F. H. & Chang, C. C. (2008). Emotional labour, job satisfaction and organizational commitment amongst clinical nurses: A questionnaire survey. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, *45*(6), 879-887.

Yoon, J. & Lawler, E.J. (2006). Relational cohesion model of organizational commitment. In *Relational Perspectives in Organizational Studies*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Zapf, D. & Holz, M. (2006). On the positive and negative effects of emotion in organizations. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *15*(1), 1-28.

Zeitz, G. (1990). Age and work satisfaction in a government agency: A situational perspective. *Human Relations*, *43*(5), 419-438.

Zhang, Q. & Zhu, W. (2008). Exploring emotion in teaching: Emotional labor, burnout, and satisfaction in Chinese higher education. *Communication Education*, *57*(1), 105-122.

ENGAGEMENT ON TWITTER: CONNECTING CONSUMER SOCIAL MEDIA GRATIFICATIONS AND FORMS OF INTERACTIVITY TO BRAND GOALS AS A MODEL FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT.

Keith A. Quesenberry, Messiah University

Michael K. Coolsen, Shippensburg University

ABSTRACT

What type of brand content increases engagement on Twitter? A content analysis of 1,000 brand Twitter posts analyzed content types that drive engagement in retweets, replies, and likes. Significant positive effects were found for contests, sweepstakes, and emoji posts on retweets; contest and sweepstakes posts on replies; and emoji posts on likes. Significant negative effects were found for educational and exclamation posts created on retweets, replies, or likes. Diffusion of innovation and uses and gratifications theories were considered in the context of viral advertising and social media engagement. Assessment of previous studies and theories leads to a proposed social media engagement model that considers brand and consumer goals, engagement form, and engagement type. Managerial implications of findings and the model are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

This research is about the social network called X, formerly Twitter. Since this research was conducted before the name change, it will be called Twitter in the rest of the paper. Twitter was founded in 2006, and this social network has grown to over 368 million monthly active users, with 247 million active daily (Dixon, 2023). Twitter is popular with businesses and influential among consumers. Ninety-six percent of Fortune 500 companies have active Twitter accounts, higher than 95 percent with Facebook accounts, 90 percent on YouTube, and 73 percent on Instagram (Barnes et al., 2020).

One-third of Twitter users read tweets from a business daily, and another third every time they log in. Seventy-eight percent have tweeted at a business, with half tweeting/posing multiple times. Ninety-three percent plan to purchase from businesses they follow and nearly 70 percent have already purchased from them. Almost 40 percent have purchased, or plan to purchase, regularly from companies they follow (Lewis, 2020).

Consumers today play an active role in circulating advertising on social media while impacting the meaning and effectiveness of brand and product messages (Rodgers & Thorson, 2017). While research exists on forms of content and engagement (Leung & Bai, 2013; Jin & Phua, 2014; Kim et al., 2014; Watkins, 2014; Colliander et al., 2015; Araujo et al., 2015; Vargo, 2016; Uzunoğlu et al., 2017), gaps in knowledge still exist on what drives and motivates consumer engagement with brands on Twitter. No study has broadly analyzed Twitter brand content type and text to determine what drives engagement across all three forms: retweets, replies, and likes.

Brands in social media must attract an audience to engage with content and share brand messages through word-of-mouth voluntarily. Promoted tweets boost initial reach but do not guarantee further reach and engagement through retweets, replies, and likes. Consumers avoid advertising on the Internet because of perceived goal impediment and ad clutter (Cho & Hongsik, 2004). How does brand social media become a part of consumers' goals to elicit word-of-mouth rather than being an impediment?

This question was considered through word-of-mouth and viral marketing scholarship, diffusion of innovation, and uses and gratifications theories applied by scholars to social media (Katz et al., 1973; Berger, 2014; Gao & Feng, 2016). Previous works identified five categories of gratifications from social media use. Alhabash and McAlister's (2015) definition of virality in a social media context provided a complete tripartite approach to social media engagement, considering user interactivity through retweets, replies, and likes.

With these theoretical foundations, the authors obtained a large data set of direct consumer behavior on Twitter from an industry social media analytics partner. Via a content analysis of a

wide set of posts from small to large brand accounts, the authors looked broadly at what type of content and text drives engagement. Then, a model for brand-consumer social media engagement is proposed.

More broadly, this study answers calls for research focusing on platforms with different characteristics than Facebook and utilizing direct social media data research to examine and explain consumer response in a natural setting (Voorveld, 2019). Scholars have called for the use of large sample sizes of consumer behavioral data as more social interaction takes place in digital environments, and measures of actual behavior can help avoid biases in self-report methods (Lapointe, 2013; Calder et al., 2016; Malthouse & Li, 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Effectiveness of Brands on Twitter

Researchers have analyzed the effectiveness of brands on Twitter and are uncovering insights. Kim, Sung, and Kang (2014) considered consumer-brand relationships, online brand community, and eWOM, identifying key variables used in a survey of Twitter users. Brand followers who identify as having close relationships with brands are more likely to retweet brand tweets and have higher intentions to continue a relationship with brands. Findings suggested that a higher level of brand trust is associated with consumers who retweet brand posts. The study was limited to one form of engagement (retweets) and did not provide insights into the type of content that may produce engagement.

Other researchers have studied Twitter's effectiveness in specific industries. Watkins' (2014) survey of NBA fans found that Twitter significantly influenced brand relationships and fan identification. Sports team identification also influenced team brand equity. Leung and Bai (2013) applied motivation, opportunity, and ability (MOA) theory to explore travelers' involvement behaviors on hotel social media pages. A survey found that travelers' social media involvement with a hotel brand's Twitter page positively impacted revisit intention. These studies were limited to sports teams and hotel brands and did not look at the type of brand content or engagement types.

Jin and Phua (2014) examined the impact of Twitter followers and celebrity type on consumer behavior with social capital, social identity theory, source credibility, and WoM. The number of followers contributed to source credibility. eWoM valence and the number of followers had an interaction effect on product involvement, buying intention, and pass-along intent. The research found an interaction effect between the type of celebrity and the number of followers on social identification with the celebrity. Additionally, it was discovered that social identification has a

mediating effect. The study focused on celebrity tweets and did not consider content-type engagement forms.

Colliander, Dahlén, and Modig (2015) compared the effects of communicating with customers on social media with one-way communication or two-way dialogue. Based on WOM theory, an experiment found that two-way dialogue with a company on Twitter enhanced brand attitudes and purchase intentions. The use of dialogue was perceived as the brand caring and investing in customers. Engagement is not as effective if a brand does not continue the conversation.

Several studies have provided insights into the type of content on Twitter that drives engagement. Araujo, Neijens, and Vliegenthart (2015) analyzed global brand messages and found that informational cues predicted retweets. Product details and links to a brand's website, social network sites, and photos or videos increased retweets. Emotional cues, when combined with informational and traceability cues (hashtags), also influenced retweets. The study was limited to one form of engagement.

Vargo (2016) assessed Twitter brand engagement by analyzing 17 of *AdAge's* mega brands list. There was moderate support for self-concept and self-enhancement engagement drivers. The research found brand tweets that promoted giveaways and mentioned popular culture events and current holidays positively influenced engagement, whereas promotional messages negatively influenced engagement. This study did not consider replies and focused only on large companies.

Uzunoğlu, Türkel, and Akyar (2017) investigated whether different corporate social responsibility (CSR) Twitter messages would impact consumer attitudes and behavior differently. Results found that product/economic and ethical CSR topics had a higher impact on purchase intent than product/purely economic topics. Economic and ethical topics had a higher impact on engagement than messages with purely ethical topics. CSR Twitter messages did not influence word-of-mouth intention or brand attitude. The study only focused on CSR messages and did not measure forms of engagement.

Previous studies provide insights into brand Twitter activity through some forms of engagement and some forms of content, but the picture is far from complete. What is missing is a broader look across multiple content variables encompassing all forms of engagement (retweets, replies, and likes). Previous studies have also focused on smaller convenience samples and self-report surveys. In contrast, this study sought to analyze a large data set of direct consumer actions on a wide range of Twitter brand accounts.

A Behavioral Approach to Social Media Engagement

The study of social media begins with viral marketing research. Petrescu and Korgaonkar (2011) defined viral marketing as "online and offline marketing activities to influence consumers to pass along commercial messages to other consumers." They argued that the diffusion of innovation theory is related to viral marketing in social media. Diffusion occurs when innovation is communicated through channels among members of a social system (Phelps et al., 2004; Rogers, 1983). Twitter is both a channel and a social system. Twitter users tell followers, who, in turn, tell their followers. The diffusion rate increases as information travels the social channel, and distribution potential increases, becoming "viral."

However, social media is more than simple dissemination through diffusion. It enables more nuanced forms of engagement. Alhabash and McAlister (2015) proposed a tripartite approach to virality where social media engagement occurs in multiple ways. They redefined virality in social media as "the combination of viral reach, affective evaluation, and message deliberation." Viral reach is the volume of social media message sharing (retweets). Message deliberation is the active, public deliberation of social media messages (replies). Affective evaluation is the expression of emotion in social media messages (likes). Brand social media engagement drives electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) and the viral spread of marketing messages through three forms. But why do certain types of content attract more engagement than others? What motivates consumers to engage in each of these respective forms?

A behavioral approach was taken to explore consumer motivation. Uses and gratifications theory explains that consumers seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs (Katz et al., 1973). Berger (2014) built upon the uses and gratifications theory, proposing that the psychological factors that drive word-of-mouth serve five key consumer functions: impression management, emotion regulation, information acquisition, social bonding, and persuasion. Gao and Feng (2016) similarly identified these five dimensions of gratification related to social media use. Understanding consumer social media gratifications and goals could provide clues to creating brand content that will elicit the desired consumer engagement.

One consumer media gratification is impression management. This happens when people engage with specific social media messages with the goal of influencing the impressions others have of them and what they have of themselves. Engaging with the right brand message produces self-enhancement, identity-signaling, and fills the conversational space. People engage with messages they feel will make them look good to others. Another consumer gratification is using media with the goal of emotion regulation. People use social media as an outlet for experiencing and expressing emotions. Social media provides a place for social support, venting, sense-making, dissonance reduction, vengeance, and rehearsal. The right brand message provides an outlet to express emotions and experience them with others.

Information acquisition is another consumer media gratification. People engage in social media to acquire information from others. They seek advice for problems or decisions. The right brand message can meet that need. Social bonding is a consumer gratification when people feel lonely or left out and turn to social media to connect with others. They use social media to interact with people with similar views and interests, forming bonds that reduce loneliness and social exclusion. The final consumer media gratification is persuasion. People often engage socially to get others to think the way they do or form the same opinion about a topic. The right brand message can aid in this interpersonal persuasion.

Berger (2014) described these five media gratifications as five goal-driven reasons for word-of-mouth. These reasons are consumer motivations for social media gratifications, which vary based on the consumer goal. Marketers may also have different goals met through different forms of social media engagement. Sometimes, marketers want to increase consumer reach through retweets to build the size of their brand community. Other times, they want to increase consumer response through replies to build brand relationships. Sometimes, they want to increase consumer recognition through likes to build brand bonds. These various marketer goals, consumer goals, and forms of engagement can be compared to align goals and outcomes. Our study of Twitter brand posts sought to build upon this theoretical understanding by determining what specific types of Twitter content may contribute to increased engagement in its three respective forms to connect various marketer and consumer goals (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of consumer gratifications and goals with forms of social media engagement

Consumer Goals and Gratifications	Forms of Social Media Engagement	Brand Goals by Social Media Engagement	Twitter Engagement Type	Twitter Content Type
Impression Management	Message Sharing	Consumer Reach (Builds Brand Communities)	Retweet	?
Persuasion				
Information Acquisition	Message Deliberation	Consumer Response (Builds Brand Relationships)	Reply	?
Social Bonding	Expression of Emotion	Consumer Recognition (Builds Brand Bonds)	Like	?
Emotion Regulation				

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research sought to study Twitter brand posts that drive engagement via viral reach (retweets), affective evaluation (likes), and message deliberation (replies). The study employed content analysis of open web data obtained from a social media metrics company to explore which Twitter brand post type and text content variables significantly contribute to increased engagement across three social media interactivity measures. The study also considered the number of brand followers as a covariate influence. Research questions were stated as follows:

RQ1: What content type variables have a positive impact on producing higher retweets (viral reach) of Twitter brand posts?

RQ2: What content type variables have a positive impact on producing higher replies (message deliberation) on Twitter brand posts?

RQ3: What content type variables have a positive impact on producing higher likes (affective evaluation) of Twitter brand posts?

RQ4: Are the impacts of content type variables on higher retweets, likes, and replies unique and separate from the impact of the number of brand followers on retweets, likes, and replies?

Method

Sample

This study was a content analysis of U.S. English language Twitter brand account posts published from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015. The sampling frame consisted of 1,000 Twitter brand account posts randomly selected through a stratified sampling of 100 posts from engagement score range increments of 100 to 1,000: (1) 1-100, (2) 101-200, (3) 301-400, and so on up to the final hundredth group (10) 901-1,000. For each post, the social media metrics company collected the brand name, sector name, number of account followers, post date, post URL, post text characters, number of retweets, number of likes, and number of replies. Only aggregate non-personally identifiable information (number counts and content from brand account posts) was used. No individual user identity data was collected.

The authors acknowledge that this data is older than normally desired by the time of publication. Initial delays were due to the large dataset provided by our industry partner, which included other social media platforms that we had analyzed before the Twitter data. We also ran into unusually long review delays in finding the right journal. Nevertheless, the research gap this paper addresses still exists, and the paper is still relevant to addressing previous calls for research in this area.

Social media network algorithms are notorious for frequent changes and constantly evolving emphasis. Social media managers acknowledge that a long-term content strategy is the key to success (not short-term algorithm hacks) is needed (Stark, 2024). While our data represents a snapshot from 2015, the theoretical insights provide a model that applies to any time and any social media platform, leveraging timeless theories.

Despite the delay between data collection and publication, this study advances scholarship as the first to connect consumer goals and gratifications, forms of social media engagement, and brand goals by social media engagement. The proposed model for social media engagement combines diffusion of innovation and uses and gratifications theories in the context of viral advertising and social media engagement, proposing a path forward for research on any platform.

A large sample size of direct behavioral data was used to explore the research questions fully. Lapointe (2013, p. 10) has explained that "Big data can be gathered more cost effectively and in more timely ways … to continually test how elements of the marketing mix combine to cause actions." Calder, Malthouse, and Maslowska (2016, p. 583) argue "More social interaction and consumption take place in digital environments (e.g. websites, social media environments, and mobile devices) where customer actions can be recorded in longitudinal big data … by measuring actual behaviors, we avoid biases prevalent to self-report methods." Malthouse and Li (2017, p. 230) explain that digital environments often provide more accurate measures and characterize social media as "the world's largest focus group."

From previous social media research, theoretical and conceptual challenges, and media and advertising industry surveys, Voorveld (2019) called for a new research agenda for brand communication in social media with a shift from experiments and surveys to research methods based on real social media data that examine and explain consumer response in a natural setting. Voorveld (2019) also recommended research into brand communication, considering social media platforms with characteristics different from Facebook, as Facebook has been the focus of previous research. This research topic and method meet these calls.

Data

Data for this study was provided by Unmetric, an independent third-party social media measurement firm that collects social media data on more than 100,000 brands across 20 countries (Unmetric website, 2023). Unmetric supplied data for U.S. English language Twitter brand posts published from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015. The 1,000 posts covered various brands and industries, with page sizes ranging from 38,944 followers (GEICO) to 9,725,264 followers (Covergirl). All brands were advertised elsewhere in other forms, and none

were new. Unmetric did not share its proprietary system for collecting data, but descriptions suggest it was captured daily from Twitter on mobile and desktop.

Coding

After reviewing the literature on content analysis coding procedures, it was determined that one author would code the initial content sample, with a second independent coder performing the same coding as a check for reliability (Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). This is an acceptable method for coding this type of manifest content. The variables were on the surface and easily observable, such as the number of hashtags, brand mentions, and the presence of a contest or sweepstakes. The authors sought to discover empirical generalizations that could be applied to our theoretical foundation. The authors felt this was an appropriate method to cast a wide net across the extensive possibility of Twitter post variables and to let the data (i.e., real consumer responses in a natural setting) present the patterns. In total, 20 content variables were defined for coding (see Appendix: Coding Scheme). The 20 variables were selected based on recommendations from the social media measurement firm Unmetric based on their five years of experience and previous insights.

The authors did a pretest across the 20 content types on a smaller random sample of 250 Twitter brand posts to narrow the large number of possible variables. The 20 variables included and coded in the pretest were: post type (link, image, video/gif, text-only), number of characters, number of words, number of hashtags, number of links, number of brand mentions, number of @ mentions, promotion/price, contest/sweepstakes, social cause/corporate social responsibility (CSR), events, celebrity, question, exclamation point, call to action, fan content (user-generated content), new/now, time/date, educational, and emoji.

From those initial results, 10 variables returned significant (or marginally significant) effects (as measured by independent samples t-tests) on retweets, replies, likes, and engagement scores. Since engagement score is a proprietary measure of Unmetric, it was decided to use it in the pretest only as another dependent variable. However, the proprietary and undisclosed nature of the function for engagement score rendered it less clear and useful for the expanded sample in the main study.

Pretest results included a significant positive effect on likes for fan content and significant negative effects on likes for question and education; significant positive effects on retweets for fan content and new/now and significant (or marginally significant) negative effects on retweets for question, education, and call to action (marginally significant); significant (or marginally significant) positive effects on replies for contest/sweepstakes and exclamation (marginally significant) and a negative effect on replies for education; and significant positive effects on engagement score for fan content, new/now, and emoji, and significant (or marginally

significant) negative effects on engagement score for social cause/corporate social responsibility (CSR), events, education, and call to action (marginally significant). There were no significant effects on all other engagement measures.

Based on the pretest results, the authors narrowed the variables to the ten that displayed the previously mentioned significant (or marginally significant) effects and expanded the sample to 1,000 randomly selected Twitter brand posts (from January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015) to see if the variables that showed promise in the pretest held up under the larger sample. After coding the larger sample, the authors found 71 posts that included mention of contest/sweepstakes, 50 posts that included mention of social cause/corporate social responsibility (CSR), 153 posts that included mention of events, 123 posts that included a question, 193 posts that included an exclamation, 393 posts that included a call-to-action, 30 posts that included fan content (UGC), 144 posts that included a mention of new/now, 94 posts that included education, and 44 posts that included an emoji.

Intercoder Reliability

With manifest content, the coding task is clerical, recording the variable occurrence. Fatigue is the primary threat to reliability (Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). Thus, one author recorded the coding of the content data for analysis, and then a secondary independent coder recorded the coding of the entire sample as a check for reliability. Both coders studied the definitions and guidelines for coding the content categories according to the coding scheme (see Appendix: Coding Scheme). The coders viewed each Twitter brand post and used the coding form (an Excel spreadsheet) to mark the existence or non-existence of each content type independently. Significant discrepancies were identified after an initial check for intercoder reliability, and the coders met to discuss posts to reach a final agreement.

Cohen's Kappa, Scott's Pi, and Krippendorff's Alpha were generated to assess intercoder reliability across all variables for all 1,000 posts. Kang et al. (1993) recommended these types of reliability estimates in advertising content analyses. The range of all three estimates across all ten content types of posts was between .84 and .99, which previous research has deemed to be acceptable levels for data analysis (Landis & Koch, 1977; Fleiss, 1981).

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

RQ1 Analysis

The RQ1 analysis tested what content type variables positively impacted producing higher retweets of Twitter brand posts. A simultaneous regression analysis was performed to assess the unique contributions of the ten content type variables (entered in as dummy-coded variables) in predicting retweets of Twitter brand posts. This simultaneous regression model accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in retweets of Twitter brand posts: $R2 = .04$, $p < .01$. This model revealed significant positive associations of contest/sweepstakes posts ($\beta = .08$, $p < .05$), new/now posts ($\beta = .10$, $p < .01$), and emoji posts ($\beta = .10$, $p < .01$) with retweets, significant negative associations of exclamation posts ($\beta = -.07$, $p < .05$) and education posts ($\beta = -.08$, $p < .05$) with retweets, and non-significant associations of social cause/corporate social responsibility (CSR) posts ($\beta = -.01$, ns), events posts ($\beta = -.04$, ns), question posts ($\beta = -.02$, ns), call to action posts ($\beta = .01$, ns), and fan content posts ($\beta = -.02$, ns) with retweets.

In the simultaneous regression analysis, descriptive mean comparisons were conducted to provide a post-hoc interpretation of the significant associations between the predictor variables and retweets. Contest/sweepstakes posts, new/now posts, and emoji posts were shown to have higher mean levels of retweets compared to posts without these types of content: $M = 594.38$ for contest/sweepstakes posts vs. $M = 339.26$ for posts without contest/sweepstakes; $M = 576.53$ for new/now posts vs. $M = 320.50$ for posts without new/now; $M = 731.09$ for emoji posts vs. $M = 340.17$ for posts without an emoji. Alternatively, exclamation posts and education posts were shown to have lower mean levels of retweets compared to posts without these types of content: $M = 301.42$ for exclamation posts vs. $M = 370.75$ for posts without exclamation; $M = 97.57$ for education posts vs. $M = 384.32$ for posts without education.

RQ2 Analysis

The RQ2 analysis tested what content type variables positively impacted producing higher replies to Twitter brand posts. A simultaneous regression analysis was performed to assess the unique contributions of the ten content type variables (entered in as dummy-coded variables) in predicting replies to Twitter brand posts. This simultaneous regression model accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in replies to Twitter brand posts: $R2 = .07$, $p < .01$. This model revealed significant positive associations of contest/sweepstakes posts ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$) and new/now posts ($\beta = .07$, $p < .05$) with replies, significant negative associations of exclamation posts ($\beta = -.07$, $p < .05$) and education posts ($\beta = -.08$, $p < .05$) with replies, and non-significant associations of social cause/corporate social responsibility (CSR) posts ($\beta = .04$, ns), events posts ($\beta = -.05$, ns), question posts ($\beta = -.001$, ns), call to action posts ($\beta = -.02$, ns), fan content posts ($\beta = -.04$, ns), and emoji posts ($\beta = .02$, ns) with replies.

In the simultaneous regression analysis, descriptive mean comparisons were conducted to provide a post-hoc interpretation of the significant associations between the predictor variables and replies. Contest/sweepstakes posts and new/now posts were shown to have higher mean levels of replies compared to posts without these types of content: M = 130.80 for contest/sweepstakes posts vs. M = 33.29 for posts without contest/sweepstakes; M = 60.54 for new/now posts vs. M = 36.79 for posts without new/now. Alternatively, exclamation posts and education posts were shown to have lower mean levels of replies compared to posts without these types of content: M = 35.12 for exclamation posts vs. M = 41.43 for posts without exclamation; M = 7.35 for education posts vs. M = 43.62 for posts without education.

RQ3 Analysis

The RQ3 analysis tested what content type variables positively impacted producing higher likes of Twitter brand posts. A simultaneous regression analysis was performed to assess the unique contributions of the ten content type variables (entered in as dummy-coded variables) in predicting likes of Twitter brand posts. This simultaneous regression model accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in likes of Twitter brand posts: $R2$ = .05, p < .01. This model revealed significant positive associations of new/now posts (β = .09, p < .01) and emoji posts (β = .14, p < .01) with likes, a significant negative association of education posts (β = -.11, p < .01) with likes, and non-significant associations of contest/sweepstakes posts (β = -.06, ns), social cause/corporate social responsibility (CSR) posts (β = -.02, ns), events posts (β = -.03, ns), question posts (β = -.04, ns), exclamation posts (β = -.05, ns), call to action posts (β = -.02, ns), and fan content posts (β = -.01, ns) with likes.

In the simultaneous regression analysis, descriptive mean comparisons were conducted to provide a post-hoc interpretation of the significant associations between the predictor variables and likes. New/now posts and emoji posts were shown to have higher mean levels of likes compared to posts without these types of content: M = 886.93 for new/now posts vs. M = 558.07 for posts without new/now; M = 1405.57 for emoji posts vs. M = 568.60 for posts without an emoji. Alternatively, education posts were shown to have lower mean levels of likes compared to posts without these types of content: M = 167.37 for education posts vs. M = 650.87 for posts without education.

RQ4 Analysis

The RQ4 analysis tested whether the various significant impacts of the content type variables on producing higher (or lower) retweets, replies, and likes were unique and separate from the effect the number of brand page fans had on retweets, replies, and likes. It is plausible that all the effects of the content type variables on retweets, replies, and likes displayed above in RQ1-RQ3 analyses are just a function of the number of brand page fans (i.e., they may not account for

unique variance in retweets, replies and likes when the number of brand page fans is inserted into the analyses as a predictor variable). Simultaneous regression analyses were performed to assess the unique contributions of the respective significant predictor variables shown in the RQ1-RQ3 analyses above and beyond the additionally inserted Twitter brand page fans variable in predicting retweets, replies, and likes.

With respect to the RQ1 analyses, the simultaneous regression model that added the number of Twitter brand page fans as a predictor variable with the previously discovered significant predictor variables of contest/sweepstakes posts, new/now posts, emoji posts, exclamation posts, and education posts accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in retweets: $R2 = .42$, $p < .01$. This model revealed a significant positive association of the number of Twitter brand page fans with retweets: $\beta = .63$, $p < .01$. Concerning the significant content type predictor variables in this model, unique and significant associations for four of the five content type predictor variables were retained with retweets ($\beta = .07$, $p < .01$ for contest/sweepstakes posts; $\beta = .05$, $p < .05$ for emoji posts; $\beta = -.06$, $p < .05$ for exclamation posts; $\beta = -.06$, $p < .05$ for education posts), whereas the association for new/now predictor posts with retweets was now rendered non-significant ($\beta = .04$, ns).

With respect to the RQ2 analyses, the simultaneous regression model that added the number of Twitter brand page fans as a predictor variable with the previously discovered significant predictor variables of contest/sweepstakes posts, new/now posts, exclamation posts, and education posts accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in replies: $R2 = .12$, $p < .01$. This model revealed a significant positive association of the number of Twitter brand page fans with replies: $\beta = .23$, $p < .01$. Concerning the significant content type predictor variables in this model, unique and significant associations for three of the four content type predictor variables were retained with replies ($\beta = .22$, $p < .01$ for contest/sweepstakes posts; $\beta = -.07$, $p < .05$ for exclamation posts; $\beta = -.06$, $p < .05$ for education posts), whereas the association for new/now predictor posts with replies was rendered non-significant ($\beta = .05$, ns).

With respect to the RQ3 analyses, the simultaneous regression model that added the number of Twitter brand page fans as a predictor variable with the previously discovered significant predictor variables of new/now posts, emoji posts, and education posts accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in likes: $R2 = .37$, $p < .01$. This model revealed a significant positive association of the number of Twitter brand page fans with likes: $\beta = .58$, $p < .01$. Concerning the significant content type predictor variables in this model, unique and significant associations for two of the three content type predictor variables were retained with likes ($\beta = .10$, $p < .01$ for emoji posts; $\beta = -.08$, $p < .01$ for education posts), whereas the association for new/now predictor posts with likes was rendered non-significant ($\beta = .03$, ns). Table 2 displays the findings for the three models in this RQ4 analysis.

Table 2. Simultaneous regression analyses predicting retweets, replies, and likes of Twitter brand posts.

	Retweets		Replies		Likes	
	β	R^2	β	R^2	β	R^2
Predictor Variable:						
Contest/sweepstakes posts	.07**	42**	.22**	12**	N/A	.37**
Emoji posts	.05*		N/A		.10**	
Exclamation posts	.06*		.07*		N/A	
Education posts	.06*		.06*		-.08**	
New/now posts	.04		.05		.03	
Number of Twitter brand page fans	.63**		.23**		.58**	

** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$. N/A = Not Applicable in Model

Considering all findings reported above, results found: (1) unique and significant effects for contest/sweepstakes posts on increasing retweets and replies, (2) unique and significant effects for emoji posts on increasing retweets and likes, (3) unique and significant effects for education posts on decreasing retweets, replies, and likes, and (4) unique and significant effects for exclamation posts on decreasing retweets and replies (see Table 3). The unique contribution of these content-type variables was proven to be independent of the number of brand fans.

Table 3. Unique and Significant Effects by Content Type on Twitter Brand Posts.

Type of Post	RQ1: Retweets (Viral Reach)	RQ2: Replies Message Deliberation)	RQ3: Likes (Affective Evaluation)
Contest/Sweepstakes	+ Significant	+ Significant	Non-Significant
Emoji	+ Significant	Non-Significant	+ Significant
Education	– Significant	– Significant	– Significant
Exclamation	– Significant	– Significant	Non-Significant

DISCUSSION

Results suggest that the presence of contest/sweepstakes and emoji post content in Twitter brand posts creates more engaging content that receives significantly more retweets (viral reach). Contest/sweepstakes content creates significantly more replies (message deliberation). Emoji brand Twitter post content significantly increased likes (affective evaluation). In contrast, educational Twitter brand posts created significantly fewer retweets (viral reach), likes (affective evaluation) and replies (message deliberation), and exclamation Twitter posts created significantly fewer retweets (viral reach) and replies (message deliberation).

The content type variables were found to be significant irrespective of a brand having a lower or higher number of fans (see Table 4 examples). The other content variables tested also saw no significant associations with retweets, replies, and likes.

Table 4. Examples of Brand Twitter Page Posts with Retweets, Replies, and Likes.

Brand Name	Followers	Retweets	Replies	Likes	Contest /Sweeps	Emoji	Education	Exclamation
McDonald's	2,732,180	7,715	105	799	Yes	No	No	No
Starbucks	9,987,688	2,810	158	10,225	No	Yes	No	No
LG Mobile	197,575	416	1,378	1,053	Yes	No	No	No
Goldman Sachs	338,380	20	1	16	No	No	Yes	No

With the example brand posts in Table 5, the McDonald's contest/sweepstakes post was: "When we look at your ad, what do we see? Lovin', lot's of it, @Microsoft. RT to try & win an empowering Xbox One. http://lovewins.com." (See https://bit.ly/2Gc1tkK) (Xbox McDonald's Twitter post, 2015). The Starbucks emoji post was: "Try adding Starbucks Refreshers strawberries to your Shaken Iced #PassionTangoTea. 🌸 🍓 ." (See https://bit.ly/2pLwfGa) (Passion Tango Tea Starbucks Twitter post, 2015). The LG Mobile contest/sweepstakes post was: "Follow us, reply with why you need a new phone using #LGG4sweepstakes, enter to win. Rules: on.fb.me/1N1aSrn." (See https://bit.ly/1UDoE4W) ("Win A New Phone LG USA Mobile USA Twitter post," 2015). The Goldman Sachs education post was: "@nyuniversity's John Sexton & $ GS' Lloyd Blankfein on globalization of #education." (See https://bit.ly/2DYYzdd) (Talks at GS Goldman Sachs Twitter post, 2015).

Table 5 presents study findings related to the five consumer social media goals, three forms of social media engagement, three brand goals, Twitter engagement type, and Twitter content type that produced significant positive or negative results.

Table 5. Consumer goals, forms of social media engagement, and significant effects by Twitter engagement and content type.

Consumer Goals Related to Social Media Gratifications	Forms of Consumer Social Media Engagement	Brand Goals Related to Consumer Social Media Engagement	Twitter Engagement Type	Twitter Content Type
Impression Management	Message Sharing	Consumer Reach to Build Brand Community	Retweet	+ Contest/Sweepstakes + Emoji − Education − Exclamation
Persuasion				
Information Acquisition	Message Deliberation	Consumer Response to Build Brand Relationships	Reply	+ Contest/Sweepstakes − Education − Exclamation
Social Bonding	Expression of Emotion	Consumer Recognition to Build Brand Bonds	Like	+ Emoji − Education
Emotion Regulation				

Note: + means significant increase and − means significant decrease

Contest/sweepstakes posts significantly increased retweets and replies, indicating consumer message sharing and deliberation. Consumer goals for social media engagement include impression management, persuasion, and information acquisition (Katz et al., 1973; Berger, 2014; Gao & Feng, 2016). A contest/sweepstakes could fulfill various consumer goals, whereas sharing (retweeting) a contest or sweepstakes would enhance the self or fill conversational space by sharing something useful, relevant, or special. A contest or sweepstakes could also serve identity-signaling as being associated with the brand or as a way to persuade others about the value or importance of the brand. The consumers fulfill their goal by sharing the message, which helps fulfill the brand goal of building a brand community and getting the message to more consumers.

Contest or sweepstakes content could also draw message deliberation (replying) as a form of information acquisition. Perhaps the post initiates recognition of a problem, whereas the consumer's goal becomes obtaining the object, service, or trip being given away. Their problem is that they do not yet have the contest or sweepstakes prize, and they are replying to the brand to acquire more information on how to get the prize. The consumer fulfills their goal by responding and the brand's goal by building the consumer relationship.

Emojis increased message sharing through retweets and increasing expressions of emotion through likes but not for influencing message deliberation with replies. Emojis are symbols created to express emotion. It makes sense that emojis in posts produce expressions of emotion through likes. A consumer's goal of social bonding is satisfied by liking a post that makes them feel an emotion, reinforcing the shared view with the brand, and reducing loneliness by building bonds with the brand and others who liked the post.

Emojis also increased message sharing through retweets. This can be seen as helping consumers fulfill their impression management goal by sharing an emotion. Sharing an emotion with an emoji can enhance the self, signal identity, and/or fill a conversation through emotions perceived as relevant, special, or common ground. Emojis could serve a consumer's goal of persuasion, whereas sharing an emotion can help persuade others about the consumer's feelings toward the brand. Persuasion happens on both a rational and emotional level. Consumer goal attainment in sharing emojis can help the brand obtain goals of building the brand community by reaching others with brand messages and building bonds with consumers through the expression of emotion associated with the brand.

Education across all forms of engagement decreased message sharing (retweets), message deliberation (replies), and expressions of emotion (likes). Why do educational brand messages not fulfill consumer's goals? It may be the environment within which posts are happening. Twitter offers a unique opportunity for conversation with posts limited to 240 characters. Educational content is usually associated with longer content, such as lectures, books, or documentaries. This idea is supported by Lister et al. (2015), who measured the results of a state social media health campaign and found that Twitter campaigns promoting healthy eating were more effective with empowering and engaging messages than educational ones.

Posts that included exclamation marks decreased message sharing (retweets) and message deliberation (replies). Regarding consumer goals of impression management, persuasion, and information acquisition, exclamation points are not seen as helpful. Marketers may see exclamation points as an indication to the consumer of importance so that they engage, but they have the opposite effect. Perhaps after so many years of advertisements using exclamation points and not delivering on the promised excitement, consumers have simply become skeptical of their true meaning. Adding an exclamation point to text does not make it exciting and engaging. The message itself must be exciting and engaging to the consumer.

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to Twitter research, shedding further light on what type of brand content increases engagement. By studying previous research and uses and gratifications theory, this study makes associations to consumer social media goals, brand goals, and forms of social media engagement. It was the first to code content type in Twitter brand post text across a wide variety of 20 variables correlated with three forms of social media engagement: viral reach (retweets), message deliberation (replies), and affective evaluation (likes).

With these connections, a model could predict consumer response to social media posts (see Figure 1). Considering brand goals of building brand community (reach), building brand-consumer relationships (response), or building brand-consumer bonds (recognition), the appropriate form of social media engagement would be selected from message sharing, message deliberation, and expression of emotion. Each form would be a measure of success in each social media network, such as retweets, replies, and likes for Twitter. Looking at the associated consumer goals, a marketer would develop brand content to meet impression management and persuasion for increasing brand community through reach, information acquisition for strengthening brand relationships through response, and social bonding or emotion regulation for strengthening brand bonds through recognition.

For instance, if a marketer's objective is to build brand community by increasing consumer reach, they would create content that aligns with a consumer's goal of impression management to stimulate word-of-mouth brand message sharing. This could involve developing content that the marketer believes will enhance the target audience's image, signal their identity, or spark conversation in their social group. The content could be entertaining, useful, or unique, and should be relevant to both the brand and the consumer, establishing common ground between the brand, consumer, and their followers. The outcome would be an increase in consumer brand message sharing, thereby expanding consumer reach by aligning business goals with consumer goals. The success of this strategy could be measured by the number of retweets on Twitter.

Figure 1. Brand Consumer Goal Model for Social Media Engagement

Managerial Implications

Chasing popular general social media content types like videos, photos, or links only gets managers so far. They end up doing what every other marketer does and still need to know what to put in the video or picture and what message to say in the text. However, if a marketer or advertiser understands the consumer motivation behind the engagement, they should be more likely to create engaging content that meets marketing goals by considering consumer goals. The brand-consumer goal model for social media engagement is a strategic approach that starts with managers first considering various brand goals and then selecting the most appropriate consumer goal or the behavioral motivation behind using social media. This model guides managers in developing content that meets both brand and consumer goals and in connecting each goal to the appropriate form of engagement and specific metric per social media network, leading to a measurement of managerial success.

For example, if a sneaker brand has a new running shoe, the brand goal would be to build a brand community. The shoe is new and needs to build awareness through reach by message sharing. That brand goal connects to a consumer goal of impression management or persuasion. Instead of creating product feature educational content with calls to action, the manager considers the target audience's motivation. For a runner's target audience, impression management could come from sharing an inspirational tweet about other runners trying to break a record. They will never break the record but have personal records to achieve. Retweeting the

message makes them feel good about themselves, look good to others, and identify them as part of the running community. They could also use brand posts for persuasion, as others may have different opinions on whether the record can be broken.

Once consumers become aware of the new product, the manager wants the target audience to consider the brand and product for purchase. The brand goal becomes consumer response to build brand relationships. Message deliberation shows interest in purchase. The brand goal connects to a consumer goal of information acquisition. The runner audience may be inspired to break their own records and seek information on how to improve performance. Brand tweets with advice from coaches and features of the new running shoe being used to break the record become relevant to the consumer as it could help them achieve their goals. The consumer responds with replies or comments seeking further information or advice.

After purchase, the brand goal becomes consumer recognition to build brand bonds. The brand goal connects to consumer goals of social bonding and emotion regulation. The runner is now using the new shoe. Brand tweets about training to break the record invites recognition by a target audience who can relate it to their own ups and downs of training. Liking the post expresses those emotions. Expressing them with people of similar interests reduces loneliness and forms social bonds that can be built around the brand.

After messages are determined, specific content types can be considered. Posts could feature a contest for a trip to the record-breaking event or for consumers to enter their own records to receive personal training. Emojis could be used in tweets with reach and recognition goals (Araujo et al., 2015; Vargo, 2016). Product, economic, or ethical CSR messages could be integrated into the social media campaign with messages about the product's sustainability or non-profit causes that support running (Uzunoğlu et al., 2017). Finally, the marketer would want to ensure dialogue with the brand response to consumers, creating a two-way conversation (Colliander et al., 2015).

The results of this study have found that content type (photo, video, link, text-only) is not a significant factor for viral success. However, the message that goes with the content type matters. Marketers need to consider the message and could utilize messages for different stages of the buying cycle and consumer goals for word-of-mouth function based on brand goals of reach (message sharing), response (message deliberation), and recognition (affective evaluation). Generic insights, such as tweets with photos gaining more engagement, do not hold true when combined with the wrong type of message.

Limitations and Future Research

There are limitations to this research. The sample was based on a random selection of Twitter brand posts over one year. Would including previous or subsequent years affect the results? Of all the Twitter brand posts in the year, 1,000 posts were randomly selected. Would increasing the sample influence the results? The selected data came from Twitter. Although Twitter is a leading social media networking site, various platforms have different characteristics and could produce different findings. It is also acknowledged that many covariate variables could have influenced the results.

Future research should be extended to other popular social networking sites such as Instagram and LinkedIn. The research was limited to English-language Twitter posts in the U.S. Future research could be extended to other countries and languages. Beyond total retweets, replies, and likes, future research could also test effects based on various target market segments. Would younger groups such as Gen Z and Millennials respond differently than older groups such as Generation X or Baby Boomers? Further research could also specifically test brand posts developed for each brand goal, consumer goal, and engagement form through consumer surveys to see if each produced the predicted engagement type.

Acknowledgments

REFERENCES

Alhabash, S., & McAlister, A. (2015). Redefining virality in less broad strokes: Predicting viral behavioral intentions from motivations and uses of Facebook and Twitter. *New Media & Society*, 17 (8), 1317-1339.

Araujo, T., Neijens, P., & Vliegenthart, R. (2015). What Motivates Consumers To Retweet Brand Content? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 55 (3), 284-295.

Barnes, N., Mazzola, A., & Killeen, M.. (2020, January 9). Oversaturation & Disengagement: The 2019 Fortune 500 Social Media Dance. *University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research*. https://www.umassd.edu/cmr/research/2019-fortune-500.html

Berger, J. (2014). Word-of-mouth and Interpersonal Communication: A Review and Directions for Future Research. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 24 (4), 586–607.

Calder, B., Malthouse, E. & Maslowska, E. (2016). Brand marketing, big data, and social innovation as future research directions for engagement. *Journal of Marketing Management,* 32 (5-6), 579-585.

Cho, C., & Hongsik J. (2004). Why Do People Avoid Advertising on the Internet? *Journal of Advertising* 33 (4), 89–97.

Colliander, J., Dahlén, M., & Modig, E. (2015). Twitter for two: investigating the effects of dialogue with customers in social media. *International Journal of Advertising*, 34 (2), 181-194.

Dixon, S. (November 6, 2023). X/Twitter: number of monetizable daily active users worldwide 2017-2022. *Statista*, https://www.statista.com/statistics/970920/monetizable-daily-active-twitter-users-worldwide/.

Dixon, S. (November 15, 2023). X/Twitter: number of worldwide users 2019-2024. *Statista*, https://www.statista.com/statistics/303681/twitter-users-worldwide/.

Fleiss, J. (1981). *Statistical Methods for Rates and Proportions*. 2nd Ed., New York: John Wiley, 38–46.

Gao, Q., & Feng, C. (2016). Branding with Social Media: User Gratifications, Usage Patterns, and Brand Message Content Strategies. *Computers in Human Behavior* 63 (October), 868–90.

Jin, S. & Phua, J. (2014). Following Celebrities' Tweets About Brands: The Impact of Twitter-Based Electronic Word-of-Mouth on Consumers' Source Credibility Perception, Buying Intention, and Social Identification With Celebrities. *Journal of Advertising* 43 (2), 181–95.

Kang, N., Kara., A., Laskey, H., & Seaton, F. (1993). A SAS Macro for Calculating Intercoder Agreement in Content Analysis. *Journal of Advertising*, 22 (June), 17-28.

Katz, E., Blumler, J., & Gurevitch, M. (1973). Uses and gratifications research. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37(4), 509e523.

Kim, E., Sung, Y., & Kang, H. (2014). Brand followers' retweeting behavior on Twitter: How brand relationships influence brand electronic word-of-mouth. *Computers In Human Behavior,* (37), 18-25.

Landis, R, & Koch, G. (1977). The measurement of observer agreement for categorical data. *Biometrics,* 33 (March), 159–174.

LaPointe, P. (2013). The Dark Corners Where Research Strategies Hide: Throwing Light at the Intersection of the New and the Old. *Journal of Advertising Research,* 53 (1), 9–10.

Leung, X.., & Bai, B. (2013). How Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability Impact Travelers' Social Media Involvement and Revisit Intention. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30 (1/2), 58-77.

Lewis, C. (2020). How valuable are your followers? *Twitter.,* https://business.twitter.com/en/blog/how-valuable-are-your-followers.html

Lister, C., Royne, M., Payne, H., Cannon, B., Hanson, C., & Barnes, M. (2015). The Laugh Model: Reframing and Rebranding Public Health Through Social Media. *American Journal of Public Health*, 105 (11), 2245-2251.

Malthouse, E., & Li, H. (2017). Opportunities for and Pitfalls of Using Big Data in Advertising Research. *Journal of Advertising,* 46 (2), 227-235.

Passion Tango Tea Starbucks Twitter post. (2015, August 25). *Twitter.* https://twitter.com/Starbucks/status/636203737812353024.

Petrescu, M., & Korgaonkar, P. (2011). Viral Advertising: Definitional Review and Synthesis. *Journal of Internet Commerce,* 10 (3), 208-226.

Phelps, J., Lewis, R., Mobilio, L., Perry, D., & Raman, N. (2004). Viral Marketing or Electronic Word-of-Mouth Advertising: Examining Consumer Responses and Motivations to Pass Along Email. *Journal of Advertising Research,* 44 (4), 333-348.

Potter, J., & Levine-Donnerstein, D. (1999). Rethinking validity and reliability in content analysis," *Journal of Applied Communication Research,* 27 (3), 258.

Rodgers, S., & Thorson, E. (2017). Digital Advertising: Theory and Research, 3rd edition, New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.

Rogers, E. (1983). *Diffusion of Innovations* 3rd ed., New York: Free Press.

Stark, Eric (May 22, 2024) *Navigating Social Media Algorithms*. Slate Teams. https://slateteams.com/blog/navigating-social-media-algorithms-long-term-strategy-over-short-term-hacks.

Talks at GS Goldman Sachs Twitter post. (2015). *Twitter*. Twitter.com/GoldmanSachs, May 20, https://twitter.com/GoldmanSachs/status/601080010083082241.

Unmetric website. (2023). *Unmetric*, https://unmetric.com/customers.

Uzunoğlu, E., Türkel, S., & Akyar, B. (2017). Engaging consumers through corporate social responsibility messages on social media: An experimental study. *Public Relations Review*, 43 (5), 989-997.

Vargo, C. (2016). Toward a Tweet Typology: Contributory Consumer Engagement With Brand Messages by Content Type. *Journal of Interactive Advertising* 16 (2), 157–68.

Voorveld, H. (2019). Brand Communication in Social Media: A Research Agenda. *Journal of Advertising* 48, no. 1 (January 2019), 14–26.

Watkins, B. (2014). An Integrated Approach to Sports Branding: Examining the Influence of Social Media on Brand Outcomes. *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications*, 6 (2), 30-40.

Win A New Phone LG USA Mobile USA Twitter post. (2015, August 11). *Twitter*. https://twitter.com/LGUSAMobile/status/631206791968354304.

Xbox McDonald's Twitter post. (2015, February 5), *Twitter*. https://twitter.com/McDonalds/status/562066321743949824.

APPENDIX: CODING SCHEME

Content Type Variable	Description
Post type	A simple indication of post type (link, image, video/GIF, or text only)
Number of characters	A simple character count including spaces
Number of words	A simple word count
Number of hashtags	A simple count of the number of hashtags used
Number of links	A simple count of the number of links (URLs) included
Number of brand mentions	A simple count of the number of times the brand name is included
Number of @ mentions	A simple count of the number of times a @ mention is included
Promotion/Price	Mention of a special discount, sale, or free offer
Contest/Sweepstakes	Mention of a contest (compete, skill) or a sweepstakes (chance)
Social cause/CSR	Mention of a non-profit, societal cause, or corporate social responsibility initiative
Events	Mention of a physical or online event occurring at a specific time
Celebrity	Mention of a celebrity name
Question	A simple indication of the presence of a question
Exclamation point	A simple indication of the presence of an exclamation point
Call to action	A simple indication of the text asking the reader to do something
Fan content	An indication that the post was written by a fan (customer), not the brand
New/Now	Mention of a word or words indicating something new (new, now, introducing)
Time/Date	Mention of a specific time, date, or deadline (including holiday, live)
Educational	Delivery of information to education or inform a topic (not product features)
Emoji	Use of one or more emojis

FACE-ISM THEORY IN YOUTUBE IMAGES OF HALEY AND TRUMP IN THE EARLY STAGE OF THE 2024 REPUBLICAN U.S. PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

John Mark King, Eastern Kentucky University

ABSTRACT

This study examined visual media coverage at a crucial stage of the 2024 Republican United States presidential primary, Jan. 23-29, 2024, when Florida Governor Ron DeSantis dropped out and pit former South Carolina governor Nikki Haley against former U.S. President Donald Trump, in the lead up to the New Hampshire Republican primary election. This presented an ideal opportunity to examine face-ism theory (Archer et al., 1983), which posits that media images of males display more facial prominence than images of females, which may influence perceptions of candidates. The research is also relevant to perceptions of organization leaders in public relations. A total of 552 images of Haley and Trump from YouTube videos published by major U.S. broadcast and cable television news networks were analyzed. Two coders achieved 97% or higher intercoder agreement. The dependent variable was a six-point body index scale. Independent variables were gender, television network, network political party favorability, and topic. Trump's images (67.9%) were more frequently cropped with more facial prominence than Haley's images (58.3%). FOX, favoring the Republican Party, published images of Trump (80.6%) with more facial prominence than images of Haley (73.7%). MSNBC, favoring the Democratic Party, also published images of Trump (64.3%) with more facial prominence than images of Haley (60.9%). Images of Trump (62.7%) outnumbered images of Haley (37.3%). Over half of Trump's images (55.8%) were unrelated to the primary and instead were more frequently related to ongoing court cases against him. Images of Haley were most frequently related to the primary (83.5%).

Keywords: Face-ism theory, United States Republican presidential primary election, public relations campaigns, political communication

INTRODUCTION

Face-ism theory, which posits that media images of men display more facial prominence than media images of women, was the theoretical basis for this research. Further, the theory says that media consumers assign perceptions of power and intelligence when viewing images of people that display more facial prominence, such as head and shoulder shots, as opposed to images cropped to display half-body or full-body shots. The early stages of the 2024 Republican Presidential primary election provided an ideal opportunity to study the differences between the display of facial prominence of former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley and former United States President Donald Trump, published by the major United States broadcast television and cable television news networks. The timeframe of the study was Jan. 23-29, 2024, after Florida Governor Ron DeSantis dropped out of the race, pitting Haley, the only major female candidate, against Trump, the only major male candidate, in the lead-up to the New Hampshire primary election. Trump won the New Hampshire primary election.

The present study was designed to measure differences in facial prominence effects that may have been influenced by gender, television network, and television network favorability toward political parties, and to provide a general understanding of visual media coverage of the 2024 New Hampshire Republican Presidential primary election. Additionally, topics associated with the images were recorded to determine the extent to which the images were related to the primary election or extraneous topics. The research is relevant to perceptions of images of organization leaders in public relations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Face-ism Theory

Archer, Kimes, and Barrios (1983) conducted five studies on face-ism and published a seminal study on the theory. Three studies used content analysis methodology, and two were experimental. The first content analysis study found that images of men were much more frequent than images of women published in United States newspapers and news magazines. Facial prominence in images of women was lower than in images of men. In the second study, the researchers analyzed photographs published in 13 publications from 11 different cultures. Findings mirrored those from the first study; images of men were more frequent than images of women, and the face-ism effect was stronger. A third historical study found that images of men showed more facial prominence than images of women in paintings and drawings from the 15th to 20th century. The fourth study used two experimental groups, each composed of male and female participants. One group was tasked with drawing a picture of a female human subject; the other group was instructed to draw a picture of a male human subject. Regardless of the experiment participant's gender, facial prominence was lower in images of women than in

images of men; this was true in both experimental groups. The fifth study, also an experiment, was designed to measure whether face-ism influences perceived attributes of the image's subject. People in images with higher facial prominence were rated higher on intelligence, ambition, and physical appearance. The face-ism theory was strongly supported in all five studies.

Schwarz and Kurz (1989) conducted experiments comparing the judgment of male and female subjects when exposed to portraits of people manipulated to display head-and-shoulders portraits versus full-body images. People in portrait photos, which showed more facial prominence, were assigned higher traits of intelligence, assertiveness, and ambition than individuals whose images included the entire body.

Zuckerman and Kieffer (1994) found that face-ism was evident in racial differences across several types of media, including images of people published in American and European periodicals, on United States postage stamps, and in American paintings. Images of Caucasians showed more facial prominence than images of minorities, who have historically suffered racial discrimination. Viewers of people in photos cropped with more facial prominence rated the subjects of the images higher on dominance than photos of people expanded to show lower facial prominence. Their conclusion was that close-up facial images convey a sense of confrontation, which they equated with a perception of dominance in the human subject of the photograph.

Dodd, Harcar, Foerch, and Anderson (1989) performed a longitudinal analysis of photographs on magazine covers in the United States from 1938 to 1986. They found that photographs of women more frequently emphasized the full body, while photographs of men were more frequently cropped to concentrate on the face.

King (2002), in a content analysis of online newspaper photographs in 17 Latin American nations, found that images of men were cropped to display more facial prominence than images of women. This trend was evident in all story types published by the newspapers.

Copeland (1989) analyzed a random sample of 14 prime-time United States network television shows and hypothesized that television images of women would show less facial prominence than images of men. The face-ism theory was supported.

Face-ism in Politics

Sparks and Fehlner (1986) conducted a content analysis of photographs of candidates published in magazines during the 1984 United States presidential election. Images of the Democratic female vice-presidential candidate, Geraldine Ferraro, were compared to images of Walter Mondale, the Democratic presidential candidate; Ronald Reagan, the Republican presidential candidate; and George Bush, the Republican vice-presidential candidate, all males.   They found no difference in facial prominence among the female and male candidates.

Konrath and Schwarz (2007) conducted a cross-cultural face-ism study of classic headshot portraits of American governors, senators, representatives, and even parliament members in Canada, Australia, and Norway. In each country, they found that images of females showed less facial prominence than images of males.

Price and King (2010) studied published news and business magazine images from the 2008 United States presidential election, which featured Sarah Palin, the female Republican vice-presidential candidate, and three male candidates: John McCain, the Republican presidential candidate; Barack Obama, Democratic presidential candidate; and Joe Biden, Democratic vice-presidential candidate. Magazine titles included *Newsweek*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Time*, *Forbes*, *Business Week*, and *Money*. The researchers developed a body index scale to measure facial prominence based on where the photo was cropped on the body (1= head/face/eyes, 2= head, neck and shoulders, 3= chest up, above breast line, 4= waist up, 5= below waist, hips, above knees, or 6= legs, at or below knees, feet or full body). Strong support for the face-ism theory was evident.

> Photographic images of male candidates were more frequently cropped to show the head/face/eyes (27.8%), head/neck and shoulders (28.2%) and chest up/above breastline (14.5%) than photographic images of the female candidate. Photographic images of the female candidate were more frequently cropped at the waist up, below waist/hips/above knees and legs/at or below knees/feet/full body than images of the male candidates. This indicates that photographic images of the male candidates more frequently were cropped at the upper regions of the body, emphasizing intellect and power, while photographic images of the female candidate were more frequently cropped at the lower regions of the body, emphasizing the figure (Price & King, pp. 573-574).

Konrath, Au, and Ramsey (2012) examined 6,610 official online photographs of politicians in 25 cultures and found that face-ism bias was unexpectedly more pronounced in cultures with lower institutional gender inequality.

Peng (2018) utilized innovative computer and regression analyses to study face-ism in the 2016 United States presidential election. Photographs of Hillary Clinton, the female Democratic candidate, and Donald Trump, the male Republican candidate, were analyzed. Variables in the study included facial orientation (pitch, roll, and yaw), face size and location, facial expressions, eye and mouth status, skin condition, whether other people were present in the photograph with the candidate or if the candidate was pictured alone, and whether the media outlet was liberal, conservative, or neutral. Peng found that the liberal or conservative nature of the media outlet impacted visual coverage, supporting the face-ism theory.

> In overall media coverage, compared with Clinton, Trump images had larger faces (β = .14), showed less happiness (β = −.46) but more anger (β = .42), and

portrayed less healthy facial skin (β = −.09) and fewer other people's faces (β = −.12, all *p*s < .001). As indicated by significant interactions, these gaps regarding face size (β = −.12, *p* < .001), happiness (β = .08, *p* < .001), anger (β = −.06, *p* = .002), skin health (β = .07, *p* = .002), and number of other faces (β = .07, *p* = .001) narrowed or reversed as the media outlets' political orientations moved from liberal to conservative (Figure 3), implying that these attributes were adopted by outlets to differentially portray the two candidates (Peng, p. 13).

King (2021) analyzed 5,425 published images of the major Republican Party (Donald Trump and Mike Pence) and Democratic Party (Joe Biden and Kamala Harris) presidential candidates in the 2020 United States presidential general election. Images were captured from YouTube videos published by United States broadcast and cable television news networks Aug. 12- Nov. 3, 2020. Images of the Democratic candidates (56.6%) were more frequently cropped to display more facial prominence than images of the Republican candidates (46.8%). Trump's published images showed less facial prominence than images of the other candidates, significant at <.001. Images of the Democratic Party vice presidential female candidate, Harris (52.9%), were cropped to display more facial prominence than images of the three male candidates (49.9%). However, the differences were insignificant and were in the opposite direction from the predictions. In the 2020 United States Presidential general election, the face-ism theory was not supported.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESES

The following research questions and hypotheses emerged from the literature review.

H1: Images of the male candidate, Trump, in the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election, will display more facial prominence than images of the female candidate, Haley.

H2: The cable television news network that generally favors the Republican Party, FOX, will publish images of Trump that feature more facial prominence than images of Haley.

H3: The cable television news network that generally favors the Democratic Party, MSNBC, will publish images of Haley that feature more facial prominence than images
of Trump.

RQ1: Will there be differences in the display of facial prominence among the television news organizations that published the images?

RQ2: Will there be differences in the display of facial prominence of the male and female candidates among the television news organizations that published the images?

RQ3: Will images of Haley be more frequently related to the New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election than images of Trump?

METHODS

Still images (photographs and illustrations) of Haley and Trump were the unit of analysis. A total of 552 photographs and illustrations of Haley and Trump from YouTube videos published by major U.S. broadcast and cable television news networks were analyzed. Still images from YouTube videos were digitally captured each day during the time period the study was conducted, Jan. 23-29, 2024. This was accomplished by performing a daily search for each network on YouTube and then coding each still image associated with the YouTube videos. Two coders achieved 100% intercoder agreement on each variable except for the body index scale, which was 97%. The dependent variable was a six-point body index scale based on where the image was cropped on the body (1=head/face/eyes, 2=head/neck shoulders, 3= chest/at or above breast line, 4= below breast line/at waist, 5= below waist/hips/above or at knees and 6=below knees/feet/full body. The body index scale was collapsed (1= chest/at or above breast line, 2= below breast line/waist) to control for cells with low frequency in chi-square analyses.

Independent variables were gender/candidate (Haley, the female candidate, and Trump, the male candidate), major U.S. broadcast and cable television news networks (NBC, CBS, ABC, PBS, CNN, FOX and MSNBC), network political party favorability (FOX, which favored the Republican Party, and MSNBC, which favored the Democratic Party), and topic (related to the 2024 Republican New Hampshire presidential primary election or not related to the 2024 Republican New Hampshire presidential primary election). Political party favorability was based on the author's consistent viewing of each network during the study period. Statistical analyses, consisting of chi-squares, were executed to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions using the jamovi project (2022) statistical software. With a sample size of 522, probability was set at <.05. Frequency counts were also conducted for each of the variables.

RESULTS

Table 1. Gender/Candidate Frequency

Gender/Candidate	Frequency	Percent
Male/Trump	346	62.7
Female/Haley	206	37.3

Note. n=552

Table 1 shows that the majority of images published featured the male candidate, Donald Trump, with 25.4 percentage points more than the female candidate, Nikki Haley.

Table 2. Television Network Frequency

TV Network	Frequency	Percent
MSNBC	167	30.3
CBS	138	25.0
FOX	85	15.4
NBC	67	12.1
ABC	50	9.1
CNN	31	5.6
PBS	14	2.5

As seen in Table 2, MSNBC (167/30.3%) published images of the candidates more frequently than any of the other networks. At 14/2.5%, PBS published the least images of the candidates.

Table 3. Television Network Political Favorability Frequency

TV Network	Frequency	Percent
Neutral CBS NBC ABC PBS CNN	294	53.3
Favor Democratic Party MSNBC	172	32.2
Favor Republican Party FOX	86	15.6

Note. n=552

Television networks that were generally neutral toward political parties published more than half the images of the two major candidates, as shown in Table 3. Networks like MSNBC, which generally favored the Democratic Party, published exactly twice as many images of the Republican presidential primary candidates as FOX, which generally favored the Republican Party.

Table 4. Topic Frequency

TV Network	Frequency	Percent
Images Related to Republican New Hampshire Primary	325	58.9
Images Not Related to Republican New Hampshire Primary	227	41.1

Note. n=552

While a majority of the published images were related to the 2024 Republican New Hampshire presidential primary election (325/58.9%), as shown in Table 4, a significant minority (227/41.1%) were not related, suggesting that there were likely distractions during the crucial week leading up to the 2024 Republican New Hampshire presidential primary election.

Table 5. Body Index Scale Frequency

Body Index Scale	Frequency	Percent
1=head/face/eyes	18	3.3
2=head/neck shoulders	85	15.4
3=chest/at or above breastline	252	45.7
4=below breastline/at waist	137	24.8
5=below waist/hips/above or at knees	53	9.6
6=below knees/feet/full body	7	1.3

Note. n=552

Table 6. Body Index Scale Frequency Collapsed

Body Index Scale	Frequency	Percent
chest/at or above breastline	355	64.3
below breastline	197	35.7

Note. n=552

As seen in Tables 5 and 6, United States broadcast and cable television networks more frequently published images of the major candidates in the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election with more facial prominence. As will be seen in the subsequent analyses, there were differences in how images of the candidates were displayed according to gender and network political party favorability.

H1: Images of the male candidate, Trump, in the 2024 New Hampshire Republican Presidential primary election will display more facial prominence than images of the female candidate, Haley.

Table 7. Gender/Candidate by Body Index Scale

Gender/ Candidate	Head/ face /eyes	Head/neck shoulders	Chest/at or above breast line	Below breast line/ at waist	Below waist/hips/above or at knees	Below knees/feet/ full body
Male/ Trump	12 3.5%	55 15.9%	168 48.6%	81 23.4%	27 7.8%	3 0.9%
Female/ Haley	6 2.9%	30 14.6%	84 40.8%	56 27.2%	26 12.6%	4 1.9%

Note. n=552; chi-square=7.0; df=5; p=n.s.

Table 8. Gender/Candidate by Body Index Scale

Gender/ Candidate	Chest/at or above breast line	Below breast line
Male/ Trump	235 67.9%	111 32.1%
Female/ Haley	120 58.3%	86 41.7%

Note. n=552; chi-square=5.3; df=1; p<.05

Tables 7 and 8 provide evidence of support for H1 and the face-ism theory. Images of the male candidate, Trump, did more frequently display more facial prominence (235/67.9%), with images cropped at the chest/at or above the breast line, than images of Haley, the female candidate (120/58.3%). Conversely, images of Haley were more frequently shown below the breast line (86/41.7%) than images of Trump (111/32.1%). These findings were statistically significant at <.05. The body index scale was collapsed in Table 8 to control for low-frequency cells in Table 7.

H2: FOX, the cable television news network that generally favors the Republican Party, will publish images of Trump with more facial prominence than images of Haley.

H3: MSNBC, the cable television news network that generally favors the Democratic Party, will publish images of Haley that feature more facial prominence than images of Trump.

Table 9. Gender/Candidate by Body Index Scale x TV Network Party Favorability

TV Network Political Party Favorability	Gender/ Candidate	Chest/at or above breast line	Below breast line	Notes
Neutral (NBC, CBS, ABC, PBS, CNN)	Male/Trump	113/66.1%	58/33.9%	n=300; chi-square=3.3; df=1; p<.05
	Female/Haley	72/55.8%	57/44.2%	
Favor Republican Party (FOX)	Male/Trump	53/80.3%	13/19.7%	n=85; chi-square=0.4; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	14/73.7%	5/26.3%	
Favor Democratic Party (MSNBC)	Male/Trump	69/63.3%	40/36.7%	n=172; chi-square=0.4; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	34/58.6%	24/41.4%	

Note. n=552

Table 9 shows that the cable television news network favoring the Republican Party (FOX) did more frequently publish images of Trump, the male candidate, displaying facial prominence (54/80.6%) than images of Haley displaying facial prominence (14/73.7%). The same trend was evident in the cable television news network favoring the Democratic Party (MSNBC). However, the differences were not as dramatic, with Trump getting more images that displayed more facial prominence (72/64.3%) than Haley (36/60.0%).   Therefore, these differences were not statistically significant, so the conclusion is that H2 and H3 were not supported.

However, there was a statistically significant difference among neutral television networks (NBC, CBS, ABC, PBS, and CNN). Among those networks, images of Trump frequently displayed more facial prominence (109/65.3%) as opposed to Haley (70/55.1%), significant at < .05.   In this case, the face-ism theory is supported as published images of the male candidate did more frequently display more facial prominence than published images of the female candidate.

RQ1: Will there be differences in the display of facial prominence among the television news organizations that published the images?

Table 10. Television Network x Body Index

TV Network	Chest/at or above breast line	Below breast line

FOX	67/78.8%	18/21.2%
CBS	102/73.9 %	36/26.1%
CNN	23/74.2%	8/25.8%
MSNBC	103/61.7%	64/38.3%
PBS	8/57.1%	6/42.9%
ABC	23/46.0%	27/54.0%
NBC	29/43.3%	38/56.7%

Note. n=552; chi-square=35.7; df=6; p= <.001

Table 10 shows substantial differences, significant at <.001, among the broadcast and cable television networks in the facial prominence of published images of the candidates. FOX, the cable television news network that favored the Republican Party, more frequently published images of the candidates displaying more facial prominence than any other broadcast or cable television network (67/78.8%). CBS, CNN, MSNBC, and PBS frequently published images of candidates with more facial prominence. Conversely, ABC (25/54.0%) and NBC (38/56.7%) published more images of the candidates cropped below the breastline, displaying less facial prominence.

RQ2: Will there be differences in the display of facial prominence of the male and female candidates among the television news organizations that published the images?

Table 11. Television Network by Body Index Scale x Gender Candidate

TV Network	Gender/ Candidate	Chest/at or above breastline	Below breastline	Notes
NBC	Male/Trump	16/44.4%	20/55.6%	n=67; chi-square=0.4; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	13/41.9%	18/58.1%	
CBS	Male/Trump	59/79.6%	19/24.4%	n=138; chi-square=0.3; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	43/71.7%	17/28.3%	
ABC	Male/Trump	14/48.3%	15/51.7%	n=50; chi-square=0.1; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	9/42.9%	12/57.1%	

PBS	Male/Trump	6/75.0%	2/25.0%	n=14; chi-square=2.4; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	2/33.3%	4/66.7%	
MSNBC	Male/Trump	69/63.3%	40/36.7%	n=167; chi-square=0.4; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	34/58.6%	24/41.4%	
FOX	Male/Trump	53/80.3%	13/9.7%	n=85; chi-square=0.4; df=1; p= n.s.
	Female/Haley	14/73.7%	5/26.3%	
CNN	Male/Trump	18/90%	2/10%	n=31; chi-square=7.4; df=1; p<.001
	Female/Haley	5/45.5%	6/54.5%	

Note. n=552

CNN was the only network that published images of Trump and Haley that differed significantly (p<.001) in terms of facial prominence. As shown in Table 11, images of Trump more frequently displayed more facial prominence, with cropping at the chest/at or above the breast line (18/90%), while images of Haley more frequently displayed images with less facial prominence, with borders below the breast line (6/54.5%) and more emphasis on her body than face. Each of the other television and cable networks also more frequently published images of Trump displaying more facial prominence than images of Haley.

One interesting, but not statistically significant, trend was that NBC and ABC more frequently published images of both candidates extended below the breast line, showing less facial prominence for both of them.

RQ3: Will images of Haley be more frequently related to the New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election than images of Trump?

Table 12. Gender/Candidate by Topic

Gender/ Candidate	Not Related to 2024 N.H. Republican Primary	Related to 2024 N.H. Republican Primary
Female/ Haley	34 16.5%	172 83.5%

| Male/
Trump | 193
55.8% | 153
44.2% |

As seen in Table 12, most images of Haley were associated with stories related to the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election (172/83.5%). On the other hand, more than half of the images of Trump (193/55.8%) were associated with stories that were not related to the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election, primarily due to the broadcast and cable television network's coverage of Trump's ongoing legal cases against him.

DISCUSSION

This research study has uncovered several findings relevant to face-ism theory in broadcast and cable television networks' visual coverage of the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary. Findings are most consistent with face-ism in politics studies by King and Price (2010) and Peng (2018).

Most importantly, statistically significant evidence, <.05, supported H1 and the face-ism theory. The male candidate, Donald Trump (67.9%), more frequently had published images displaying more facial prominence than his opponent, Nikki Haley (58.3%), the female candidate. The difference in the image cropping was evident when considering whether the images were more frequently cropped at, above, or below the breast line. Trump's images were more frequently cropped at or above the breast line, suggesting power, assertiveness, and intelligence. In contrast, Haley's images were more frequently covered below the breastline, emphasizing her physical figure. This finding provides clear evidence for the face-ism theory, which posits that images of men are cropped more frequently to display more facial prominence and less of the body than media images of women. This phenomenon seems to be related to longstanding cultural influences dating back hundreds of years and across many media types, as outlined in seminal research by Archer, Kimes, and Barrios (1983) and subsequent research by Zuckerman and Kieffer (1994); Dodd, Harcar, Foerch, and Anderson (1989); Copeland (1989) and King (2002). However, the face-ism theory was not supported in the study of the 2020 United States presidential election (King, 2021), in which Kamala Harris was the female Democratic Party vice-presidential nominee. This could be due to increased media sensitivity to Harris' African American race/ethnicity.

Interestingly, the cable television news networks that favored the Republican Party or the Democratic Party did not differ in how images of Trump and Haley were displayed. However, the neutral television networks (NBC, CBS, ABC, PBS, and CNN) did differ on the body scale index, favoring Trump (65.3%) over Haley (55.1%) in terms of facial prominence in published images of the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary. This contradicts the traditional journalistic standards of balance and non-bias, which is expected of networks that do not favor either political party. In this case, the face-ism theory was supported as published images of the male candidate frequently displayed more facial prominence than those of the female candidate, significant at <.05.

One finding consistent with many previous face-ism studies was that the published images of the male candidate would outnumber the images of the female candidate. A majority of the images published by United States broadcast and cable television news networks in the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election were of the male candidate, Trump (62.7%),

while images of Haley were much less frequent (37.3%). Male dominance in media images was alive and well in this campaign.

There was strong, statistically significant evidence (p<.001) that there was a network effect on the overall facial prominence of images published by broadcast and cable television networks. Five broadcast or cable television networks (FOX, CBS, CNN, MSNBC, and PBS) all published images of the candidates that displayed more facial prominence with cropping of images at the chest/at or above the breast line, while ABC and NBC more frequently published images below the breast line. RQ1 did reveal these interesting findings, suggesting that publication sources should be utilized in face-ism studies.

When an analysis of the differences in the display of facial prominence of the male and female candidates among the news organizations that published the images was conducted, RQ2 showed that all the networks generally followed the same pattern. While only CNN published images of the male and female candidates differing significantly (p<.001) in terms of facial prominence, it is instructive to note that the remainder of the broadcast and cable television networks consistently treated images of the candidates the same, with images of the male candidate showing more facial prominence than images of the female candidate and images of the female candidate revealing more of the physical figure.

In a United States presidential election year, when there is intense media and voter interest, it is interesting to note that more than half (55.8%) of the images of Trump were not associated with the 2024 New Hampshire Republican primary election, but rather primarily the many ongoing legal cases against him. On the other hand, Haley's images were largely associated with the 2024 New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election (83.2%). Despite this, Trump handily won the New Hampshire Republican presidential primary election.

Finally, these findings have significant implications for public relations, particularly in how chief executive officers of United States corporations and companies and directors of government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and non-profits are visually portrayed in media coverage. How these leaders are depicted visually in earned, owned, shared, and paid media can influence public perceptions of their intelligence, competence, assertiveness, and ambition, all of which are key leadership attributes. Therefore, public relations professionals and business managers should pay close attention to the images used in all organization communications vehicles to ensure a fair representation of facial prominence among men and women. This is crucial to prevent the perception of the company or organization as visually perpetuating gender inequity, whether knowingly or by negligence.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

Two limitations of this research were the short nature of the study's timeline, six days, and the fact that the two candidates who were compared, Trump and Haley, were both primary candidates of one political party in the United States, the Republican Party. Future studies would benefit from examining media images of both the Democratic and Republican candidates in the United States general presidential election over a longer period to examine the face-ism theory on a larger scale. The 2024 United States presidential election, with Republican Party nominee Donald Trump, a white, male candidate, and Democratic Party nominee Kamala Harris, a female, African American, Indian descent candidate, presents an ideal research opportunity to test the face-ism theory along gender, race/ethnicity, and national family origin dimensions.

REFERENCES

Archer, D., Iritani, B., Kimes, D. D., & Barrios, M. (1983). Face-ism: Five studies of sex differences in facial prominence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *45*(4), 725–735.

Copeland, G. A. (1989). Face-ism and Primetime Television. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *33*(2), 209–214.

Dodd, D. K., Harcar, V., Foerch, B. J., & Anderson, H. T. (1989). Face-ism and facial expressions of women in magazine photos. *The Psychological Record*, *39*(3), 325–331.

King, J.M. (2021). Face-ism Theory in YouTube Images of Candidates in the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election. *Quarterly Review of Business Disciplines 8*(1), 77-88.

King, J. M. (2002, June). The Face-ism Effect Revived: Male Visual Dominance Alive and Well in Latin American Online Newspapers Across 17 Nations. In *Proceedings of the Hawaii International Conference on the Social Sciences, Honolulu, Hawaii*.

Konrath, S., Au, J., & Ramsey, L. R. (2012). Cultural differences in face-ism: Male politicians have bigger heads in more gender-equal cultures. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *36*(4), 476–487.

Konrath, S. H., & Schwarz, N. (2007). Do male politicians have big heads? Face-ism in online self-representations of politicians. *Media Psychology, 10*(3), 436.

Peng, Y. (2018). Same candidates, different faces: Uncovering media bias in visual portrayals of presidential candidates with computer vision. *Journal of Communication*, *68* (5), 920–941.

Price, K., and King, J. (2010). Face-ism in the 2008 U.S. Presidential General Election: Photo coverage of candidates in news & business magazines. *Business Research Yearbook, 17*(2), 570-577.

Schwarz, N., & Kurz, E. (1989). What's in a picture? The impact of face-ism on trait attribution. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *19*(4), 311–316.

Sparks, G. G., & Fehlner, C. L. (1986). Faces in the news: Gender comparisons of magazine photographs. *Journal of Communication*, *36*(4), 70–79.
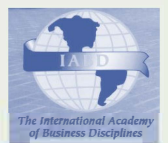
The jamovi project (2022). Jamovi (Version 2.3) [Computer Software] Retrieved from https://www.jamovi.org.

Zuckerman, M., & Kieffer, S. C. (1994). Race differences in face-ism: Does facial prominence imply dominance? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *66*(1), 86–92.