Personalization Strategies in Donald Trump's Twitter Campaigns: A Comparative Analysis of the 2020 and 2024 U.S. Presidential Elections

Justin Kischka, Lukas Kuhlins, Lina Kupper, Andreas von Mücke

University of Augsburg

The recently re-elected U.S. President Donald Trump is known for his use of strategies on social media. Thus, Trump's frequent Twitter activity has thoroughly been studied. However, there are no studies analyzing his personalization strategies. The concept of personalization strategies encompasses techniques that individuals or organizations employ to customize their communication in a manner that resonates with specific audiences through the integration of personal or relatable elements, including mention of individual traits, past experiences, and interests (Meeks 2016).

This study analyzes the Twitter activity of Donald Trump in the months leading up to the U.S. presidential elections of 2020 and 2024. The primary focus is on the personalization strategies used in his tweets, based on the framework outlined by Meeks (2016). The paper categorizes Trump's tweets according to Meeks' categories of Gender, Uniqueness, Hobbies/Sports, Family, Religion and Other, as outlined in her study on the use of personalization and interactivity in political communication on Twitter. Meeks (2016) analyzed U.S. Senate candidates' Twitter feeds during the 2012 election cycle, revealing how personalization strategies varied by gender and contributed to electoral success. The analysis of the tweets' content aims to explore how Trump's use of personalization evolved over time and to compare the strategies employed in the two election cycles. Through this comparative analysis, the paper gains insight into the role of personalization in political communication on social media (Meeks 2016).

Meeks, Lindsey. 2016. "Gendered Styles, Gendered Differences: Candidates' Use of Personalization and Interactivity on Twitter." *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 13/4. 295–310.