

1. Proposers

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2. Statement of Topic

Information Disclosure Behaviour of Israeli Politicians on Facebook: Examining self-presentation and emotional-based content

3. Significance and Relevance of the Topic

Social networking sites have become a necessity in political campaigns in recent times since they enable politicians to promote themselves freely and to communicate interactively with the electorate without the interference of traditional media (Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2015; Gueorguieva, 2008; Paek, Hove and Cole, 2013; Strandberg, 2013). Prior studies show that the information behaviour of politicians on social networking sites has been characterized by the disclosure of the politician's 'soft' personal traits, such as character and personality, providing a detailed disclosure of their private lives (Erikson, 2008; Holtz-Bacha, Langer & Merkle, 2014; Xue, 2014) aimed to convey a more desired self (Bronstein, 2014). Furthermore, politicians have abandoned serious political debate and issue-oriented campaigning (Baxter and Marcella, 2012; Bronstein, 2013; Xue, 2014) to focus on symbolic and affective messages that have been shown to be particularly impactful on how citizens respond to political messages (Bar-Ilan, Bronstein and Aharony, 2015; Brader, 2005; Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2015; Samuel-Azran, Yarchi, and Wolfsfeld, 2015).

The current paper presents preliminary results of an examination of the information disclosure behaviour of Israeli political leaders as displayed on their personal Facebook pages during the 2015 Israeli general election campaign, focusing on these two elements related to the disclosure of information. Thus, understanding the information disclosure behaviour of politicians on social networking sites can shed some light on the role that these sites play as information and communication platforms and on the ways that people purposively present themselves and disclose information online.

4. Content

In my poster I will present preliminary data regarding the following research questions: (1) to what extent Israeli politicians used self-presentation on their Facebook pages during the 2015 election campaign? (2) to what extent Israeli politicians used emotional-based content on their Facebook pages during the 2015

election campaign? The content of the poster will be divided into the following categories:

Background: the main concepts that represent the framework of the study will be presented including the role that social networking sites play as political platforms.

Goals of the study: the two main goals of the study will be presented

Content analysis: a brief description of the analysis of the data will be described.

Key findings: this section will present textually and visually the main findings yielded regarding the rate of self-disclosure and the use of emotionally based content by politicians from four different wings (centre, left, right and ultra-orthodox) as well as the differences between newly appointed head of parties and veteran politicians.

Conclusions: this section sums up preliminary results about the information disclosure behaviour of Israeli politicians on Facebook during campaign elections.

5. Abstract

Information disclosure has been identified as a core information behaviour on social networking sites where users use self-presentation and self-disclosure to build the image they wish to convey to the public and to create an affective bond with their audiences. These sites have become central platforms for political communications especially during election campaigns because they facilitate direct interactions between politicians and potential voters. The current paper presents preliminary results of an examination of the information disclosure behaviour of Israeli political leaders as displayed on their personal Facebook pages during the 2015 Israeli general election campaign. All of the posts from the Facebook pages of 10 Israeli party leaders were collected for 45 days prior to the elections and analysed to identify elements of self-presentation and emotional-based content. Findings show that the use of self-presentation through the disclosure of personal information was higher for politicians new to their leadership posts from centred and left wing parties while the dominance of emotional-based content was salient on pages from right wing parties. Politicians posted emotional messages mainly on posts dealing with the election process, their party and security issues.

6. References

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