

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

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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 ($\beta = .14$), showed less happiness ($\beta = -.46$) but more anger ($\beta = .42$), and

portrayed less healthy facial skin ($\beta = -.09$) and fewer other people's faces ($\beta = -.12$, all $ps < .001$). As indicated by significant interactions, these gaps regarding face size ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .001$), happiness ($\beta = .08$, $p < .001$), anger ($\beta = -.06$, $p = .002$), skin health ($\beta = .07$, $p = .002$), and number of other faces ($\beta = .07$, $p = .001$) 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

Note. n=552

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%
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Note. n=552; chi-square=82.3; df=1; p= <.001

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.

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