

#thatswhatsheaid

Gender Partisanship: Differences in Senatorial Twitter Behavior

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Background

Twitter provides a platform for senators to communicate their policies and interact with their followers in 140 characters.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether female senators and male senators tweet differently based on a variety of factors such as content, tone, and partisanship of the tweet.

By analyzing tweets over time, differences between female and male senators emerge as each gender communicates their issues and policies differently in comparison to the other.

Research Questions

When we look to our leaders on Twitter, specifically the members of the Senate, is there a difference in Twitter behavior based on gender?

Do male senators tweet using a more partisan tone in comparison to female senators?

Do Senators tend to tweet on gender specific issues?

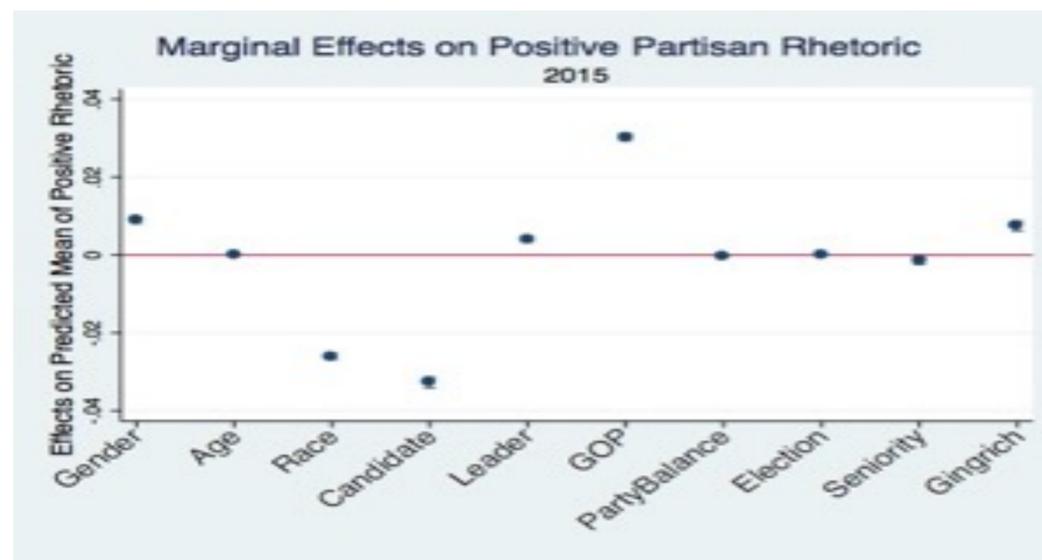
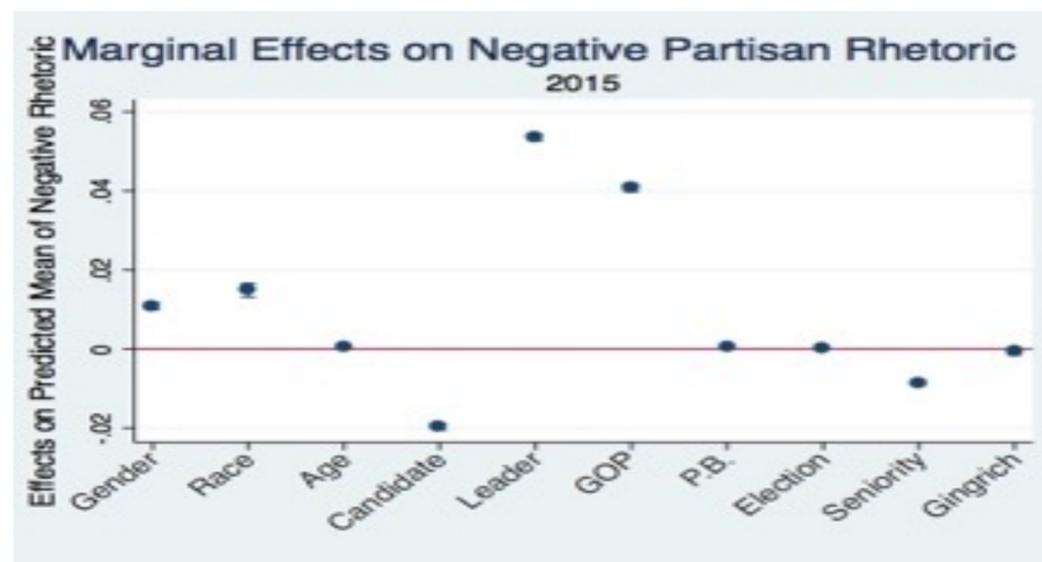
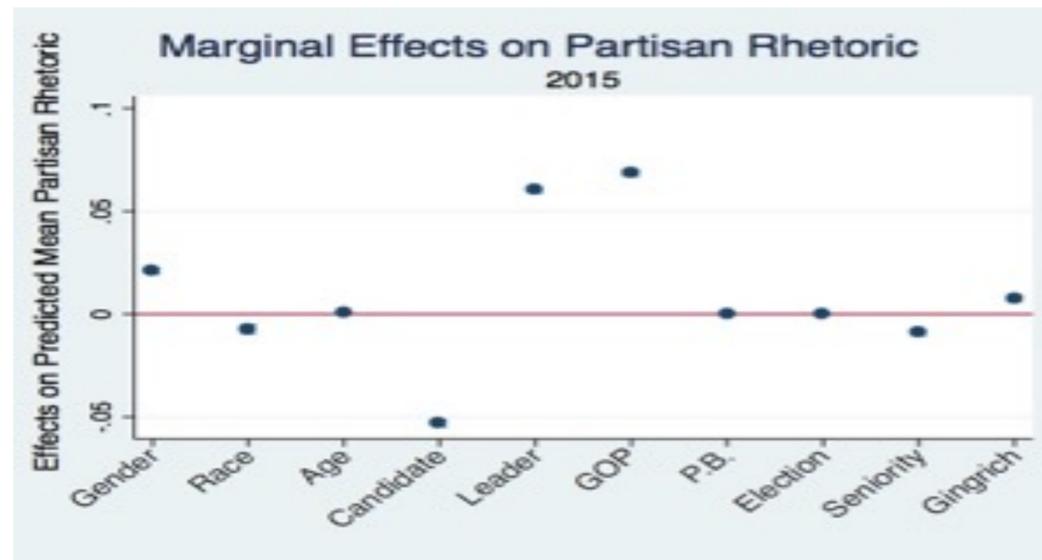
Methods

Senate Twitter Activity: Analyzed from January 2015- June 2015

Total Observations: 55,236 tweets

Tweets have been coded using the 2014 Policy Agendas Topic codebook

Controls: gender, age, race, candidate, party leader, party identification, party balance, election, seniority, Gingrich senators



Results

In 2015, being a Republican increases the chance of using partisan rhetoric by 7% and being male by 1%.

Party Leader & GOP are the highest determiners for negative partisan rhetoric.

GOP is the highest determiner for positive partisan rhetoric.

Being a female senator has less than a 2% impact on the use of partisan rhetoric in tweets.

Conclusion

Party and position have the greatest influence when it comes to using partisan rhetoric on Twitter, rather than gender.

Highest predictor of partisanship is being a Republican.

Gender ultimately has little effect on the use of partisanship in tweets, but not content. Males tend to tweet about male stereotyped issues such as the economy and military, while females emphasize female stereotyped issues like education and family.

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