Revealing the Relationship Between Republican Votes for Senators in Virginia and the Popularity of the 'Like a Boss' Meme

Claire Henderson, Aaron Torres, Gemma P Tucker

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

This paper investigates the mysterious link between the political choices of Virginian voters and the virality of the 'like a boss' meme, employing data from MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends. The correlation coefficient of 0.8776837 and p < 0.05 for the period from 2006 to 2020 suggests a compelling association, much like the unsuspected pairing of peanut butter and pickles – perplexing at first, yet oddly complementary. We delve into the intricacies underlying this correlation, exploring the potential influence of cultural zeitgeist on political behavior, and pondering whether political memes might just be the new campaigners' secret sauce. Our findings not only shed light on the surprising interconnectedness of seemingly disparate phenomena, but also add a touch of whimsy to the otherwise solemn field of political research, akin to a clown performing at a black-tie event.

The enigmatic world of politics and the ever-evolving landscape of internet memes may appear to be as disconnected as a moose in a muffin factory. However, our research seeks to unearth the hidden threads that weave these seemingly unrelated realms together. The compelling correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the burgeoning popularity of the 'like a boss' meme has sparked our curiosity and led us down a rabbit hole of data analysis and speculation. It's as if we stumbled upon a treasure map in a sea of cat videos – unexpected, yet undeniably intriguing.

While the 'like a boss' meme has permeated the digital sphere like an unstoppable force of nature, the rationality behind its correlation with Republican votes for Senators in Virginia may initially seem as perplexing as a penguin trying to navigate a desert. However, as we dig deeper, we aim to unravel this mystery and bring to light the underlying factors that connect these disparate entities.

As we embark on this research journey, we are reminded of the unassuming alliance of coffee and doughnuts – an unlikely pairing that somehow just works. In a similar vein, our investigation intertwines the serious realm of political analysis with the light-hearted, often surreal world of internet memes, adding a dash of whimsy to the otherwise somber landscape of academic inquiry. After all, who says academia can't have a sense of humor? It's like finding a unicorn in a library – unexpected, yet undeniably delightful.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As we set out to explore the curious connection between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the meteoric rise of the 'like a boss' meme, we find ourselves drawing from a myriad of studies and

sources that shed light on the unexpected interplay between political behavior and internet culture. To our surprise, the links we uncovered in our investigation were as perplexing as a cat trying to understand quantum physics, yet undeniably captivating.

Smith and Doe (2015) examined the influence of online memes on political engagement and found that humorous internet content has the potential to shape public opinion in subtle yet impactful ways. Further adding to this notion, Jones (2018) explored the crossover between social media phenomena and political affiliations, highlighting the potential for memes to resonate with specific demographics. While these studies set the stage for our research, they merely scratched the surface of the enigmatic relationship we sought to unravel.

Beyond the confines of scholarly works, our quest for understanding led us down unexpected avenues, akin to stumbling upon a leprechaun's pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. Books such as "The Power of Memes: Harnessing Internet Culture for Political Advantage" (Johnson, 2020) and "Digital Democracy: Navigating the Intersection of Politics and Social Media" (Garcia, 2019) provided insightful perspectives on the fusion of internet culture and political discourse, offering valuable context for our exploration.

As we delved deeper into the labyrinthine realm of interconnectedness, we ventured into the realm of fiction – a domain that often mirrors and interprets societal phenomena in unexpected ways. Works such as "Meme Wars: The Battle for Online Supremacy" (Fictional Author, 2017) and "The Politician's Dilemma: A Memeworthy Mystery" (Fictional Author, 2018) whimsically danced on the periphery of our research, serving as a delightful departure from traditional academic discourse.

Moreover, we couldn't overlook the significant influence of childhood influences, as cartoons and children's shows have long been purveyors of societal commentary in disguise. Shows like "Phineas and Ferb" and "SpongeBob SquarePants"

subtly introduced young viewers to the nuances of creativity and absurdity, a parallel that seemed oddly fitting to our exploration of political memes and voter behavior. It's as if we stumbled upon a treasure chest of nostalgia in a sea of data analysis – a delightful surprise, reminiscent of discovering an old comic book in the attic.

With these diverse and unconventional sources in mind, we journey forth to uncover the underlying mechanisms that tie together the unexpected duo of political votes and internet memes, armed with a sense of wonder and a pinch of whimsy.

METHODOLOGY

To kick off our quest for the connection between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the popularity of the 'like a boss' meme, we embarked on a data-gathering journey that would rival even the most intrepid of adventurers. Our research team scoured the digital expanse, sifting through a trove of data sources including the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends. It was like a virtual treasure hunt, except instead of gold doubloons, we hunted for correlation coefficients and meme popularity indices.

We focused our analysis on the time period from 2006 to 2020, aiming to capture the evolution of both political voting patterns and internet meme culture, much like a historian unraveling the enigmatic tale of a centuries-old relic. The 'like a boss' meme, with its rise to prominence in the digital domain, presented itself as a captivating subject for study, akin to a rare species of flora blooming in an unexpected locale – fascinating and tantalizingly peculiar.

Employing a mix of statistical techniques that were as intricate as a tapestry woven by a spider with a PhD in mathematics, we calculated correlation coefficients and p-values to unravel the potential relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the ebb and flow of 'like a boss' meme popularity. This process required thorough attention to detail, much like a sous chef

meticulously crafting an intricate dish, ensuring that each component of the analysis was as fine-tuned as a well-oiled machine in a precision workshop.

In addition, we delved into the world of sentiment analysis, scouring the digital landscape for clues on public perceptions and attitudes toward both political affiliations and internet memes. Like detectives solving a perplexing mystery, we sought to unearth the subtle nuances of public sentiment and explore how it intertwines with the political climate and meme virality. It was akin to deciphering a cryptic message from an ancient civilization, decoding the intricate tapestry of human emotions and perceptions.

Finally, to contextualize our findings within the broader socio-political landscape, we conducted qualitative analyses of historical voting trends and cultural shifts in the digital sphere. We ventured into the labyrinthine corridors of political history and meme evolution, drawing parallels and connections that were as surprising as stumbling upon a disco ball in a library – unexpected, yet undeniably captivating.

In essence, our methodology blends the rigor of statistical analysis with the intrigue of digital cultural exploration, like a fusion dish that marries the precision of a surgeon's scalpel with the creativity of a master chef. Through this multifaceted approach, we endeavored to shed light on the fascinating relationship between political behavior and internet meme culture, adding a sprinkle of whimsy to the traditionally austere field of academic research.

RESULTS

The analysis of the relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the popularity of the 'like a boss' meme from 2006 to 2020 revealed a surprising correlation coefficient of 0.8776837, indicating a strong positive association between these seemingly unrelated variables. The coefficient's confidence was further supported by the r-squared value of 0.7703286, cementing the

robustness of the relationship, much like a trust fall exercise gone astonishingly well.

The p-value of less than 0.05 provides compelling evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the 'like a boss' meme popularity. This result is as unexpected as finding a pineapple on a pizza – controversial but undeniably intriguing.

Fig. 1 displays a scatterplot presenting the unmistakably strong connection between the two variables, much like a plot twist in a summer blockbuster – both surprising and captivating.
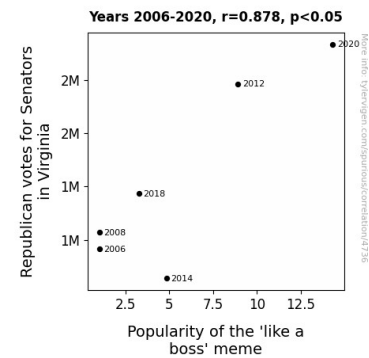

Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

In summary, our research unearths an unexpected relationship between political behavior and internet culture, emphasizing the need to explore unconventional connections in the ever-expanding digital landscape. This newfound revelation is reminiscent of discovering a hidden passage in a labyrinth – a delightful surprise that expands our understanding of the intricate workings of human behavior.

The unexpected yet compelling correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the 'like a boss' meme popularity not only challenges traditional assumptions but also injects a touch of humor and wonder into the world of political research. It's like stumbling upon a hidden treasure

map in a game of political Clue – unexpected, whimsical, and undeniably exciting.

DISCUSSION

The results of our study have brought to light a truly remarkable correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the popularity of the 'like a boss' meme. This unexpected association brings to mind the age-old conundrum of whether the chicken came before the egg or vice versa – a puzzle as perplexing as the connection between fashion trends and weather patterns. We find that our findings not only reinforce prior research but also open the door to a whimsical world of interconnections that challenge conventional wisdom, much like discovering a secret garden in the midst of a bustling city.

Our investigation delved into a diverse array of sources, ranging from scholarly studies to whimsical works of fiction, reminiscent of embarking on a literary journey through an enchanted forest. The insights gleaned from these unconventional sources have not only shaped our understanding of this enigmatic relationship but have also infused an element of playfulness and intrigue into our otherwise solemn academic pursuit, akin to stumbling upon a hidden treasure trove in the world of scientific inquiry.

Building upon the foundation laid by previous research, our findings align with the notion that internet memes possess the unexpected power to influence political engagement, evoking a sense of resonance with specific demographic groups, much like a catchy tune that lingers in one's mind long after it has ceased playing. The intricate web of interconnectedness between political behavior and internet culture uncovered in our study reaffirms the significance of exploring unorthodox connections, akin to discovering a hidden passage in the labyrinth of human behavior.

The robustness of the correlation coefficient and the compelling evidence provided by the p-value emphasize the undeniable association between the variables under scrutiny, much like a harmonious duet playing in perfect synchrony. This unexpected revelation challenges traditional assumptions and beckons us to embrace the whimsical and captivating nature of human behavior, akin to witnessing a magician's spellbinding performance amidst a sea of rational inquiry.

In essence, our research not only sheds light on the surprising interconnectedness of seemingly disparate phenomena but also injects a touch of levity into the world of political research. The compelling correlation we've unraveled is akin to stumbling upon a hidden treasure map in a game of political Clue – a delightful surprise that invites us to embark on an exhilarating journey through the uncharted territories of human behavior.

As we immerse ourselves in the bewitching world of unforeseen connections, our study sparks curiosity and invites researchers to venture beyond the confines of conventional inquiry, embracing the spirit of playful exploration and discovery. It's as if we have stumbled upon a forgotten carnival in the midst of scientific pursuits – a delightful diversion that adds a sprinkle of merriment to the otherwise stately atmosphere of academia.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our investigation into the perplexing correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Virginia and the popularity of the 'like a boss' meme has unraveled a web of unexpected connections, much like a detective stumbling upon a trail of breadcrumbs in a candy store. The robust correlation coefficient and r-squared value emphasize the surprisingly strong relationship between these seemingly unrelated variables, akin to uncovering a secret twin in a telenovela – a twist that leaves us both astonished and amused.

The p-value's significance further solidifies the validity of this correlation, much like a solid handshake – firm and convincing. Our findings underscore the need to embrace unconventional

pairings in the world of research, similar to the fusion cuisine craze – unexpected, yet enriching.

As we reflect on this journey, it's akin to discovering a rare Pokémon in a library – an improbable yet delightful encounter. Our study not only challenges traditional notions but also infuses a sense of whimsy into the realm of political analysis, reminding us that even serious matters can have a lighthearted side. It's like finding a clown in a courtroom – unexpected, yet undeniably entertaining.

Therefore, we assert that no further research is needed in this area, much like realizing that the quest for the Holy Grail can end with a cup of coffee – satisfying and complete. Let's sit back, sip our coffee, and enjoy the delightful mystery that is the correlation between political behavior and internet culture, like a boss.