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Liking goes from the perceiver's self-interest, but respect is socially shared

Abstract: Liking and respect are postulated as two dimensions of interpersonal attitudes. Liking-disliking is an idiosyncratic response which depends mostly on how target persons influence interests and well-being of the attitude holder and is accompanied by beliefs in their communal traits. Respect-disrespect is a socially shared response which depends mostly on the social status of target persons and is accompanied by beliefs in their agency. This Self-interest /Status Model (SSM) of differences between liking and respect was tested in two studies. It was predicted and found that respect responses (and underlying judgments of agentic traits) are socially shared to higher extent than liking responses (and underlying judgments of communal traits).

Key words: liking, respect, interpersonal attitudes, agentic traits, communal traits, styles of conflict behavior, competition, accommodation, social sharedness

Interpersonal attitudes studied under the headings of interpersonal attraction and impression formation are usually (though implicitly) conceived as unitary entities and are virtually equated with liking or global evaluation of another person. This assumption is typical for classical studies on both interpersonal attraction (Byrne, 1971) and impression formation (Anderson, 1981) and it frequently underlies also recent works on both topics. However, a substantial amount of theorizing and empirical results suggests that attitudes in general may be ambivalent (Jonas, Brömer & Diehl, 2000), and the same is true for interpersonal attitudes (Grabowski, Wojciszke & Broemer, 2005), implying their dimensionality or existence of distinct facets of these attitudes, with various antecedents and diverging consequences for psychological processes and behavior. Indeed, there is now compelling evidence that person impressions involve two distinct dimensions of morality and competence, and there is also a suggestion that interpersonal attraction involves two dimensions of liking and respect (Wojciszke, Abele & Baryła, 2009). In the present work it is theorized that liking is a more idiosyncratic response than respect, the latter being socially construed and shared to a higher degree than the former.

Dimensionality of First Impressions: Communion and Agency

Asch (1946), the founder of impression formation research, argued that first impression should be conceptualized as a unitary "Gestalt" or a coherent configuration of the perceived person's characteristics. However, already his own empirical work on central traits brought a seed of bi-dimensionality into impression formation, and this idea was elaborated in later studies on the structure of implicit personality theories. Rosenberg and Sedlak (1972) showed that co-occurrences of different traits in person impressions were underlain by two relatively independent dimensions. Although Rosenberg, Nelson and Vivekananthan (1968) dubbed the dimensions *intellectually good-bad* and *socially good-bad*, the names *agency* versus *communion* may be equally or even more appropriate. Numerous traits marking the intellectually good-bad dimension have more to do with agency in general than with intellect (e.g. *persistent, industrious, wavering*), whereas many of traits defining the socially good-bad dimension clearly pertain to communion (e.g. *sincere, helpful, dishonest*). Based on factor analyses of trait

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batteries, Kinder and Sears (1985) claimed that communion (C) and agency (A) constitute two separate and basic clusters of traits in the perception of political leaders and reviewed data showing that the two substantially influence people's voting decisions. Similarly, a substantial amount of research on leadership effectiveness in organizations shows that communal integrity and agency are two basic perceptions of a successful leader (cf. Chemers, 2001).

The prevalence C and A-related information in person perception was approached in a different way by Wojciszke (1994) who asked his participants for recollections of emotionally involving episodes in which they had come to a clear-cut evaluative conclusion on other people or themselves. Content analyses of over one thousand episodes showed that in three fourths of them the evaluative impression was based on C- or A-related considerations. Although both C and A categories of behavior construal are prominent in person perception, the two differ in important ways, especially in their motivational relevance from the self- versus other-perspective. As postulated by Peeters (1992) and found by several authors (Wojciszke, Dowhyluk & Jaworski, 1998), A qualities are *self-profitable* in nature, whereas C traits are mainly *other-profitable*. That is, competence is directly and unconditionally rewarding for a person showing this quality rather than for others (whatever one does, it is better to do it efficiently). Similarly, lack of agency is unconditionally detrimental to the actor rather than to others (others may also loss from the actor's incompetence, but on the condition that their outcomes are dependent on his or her acts). The opposite is true for communal properties, which are directly rewarding for surrounding others, while lack of communion is directly harmful to others, the perceiver included. Due to these functional differences, person perception is dominated by communal over agentic content, while self-perception is dominated by agentic over communal content as shown by a large amount of data accrued by Abele and Wojciszke (2014) and Wojciszke (2010). For example, evaluative impressions of others are much more influenced by C than A content (Wojciszke, Bazinska & Jaworski, 1998), while self-esteem depends to much a higher degree on A than C content (Wojciszke, Baryla, Parzuchowski, Szymkow & Abele, 2011).

Dimensionality of Interpersonal Attitudes: Liking and Respect

As already mentioned, a majority of research assume implicitly unidimensionality of interpersonal attitudes. Nevertheless, several authors postulated various dimensions of attraction: liking, and admiration (Heider, 1958), affection and respect (Rubin, 1973), friendship, liking and respect (Newcomb, 1960), social versus intellectual attraction, and liking versus respect. The latter distinction received more empirical attention than others, starting from the factor-analytic work of Kiesler and Goldberg (1968). Their first factor, liking, included such declared activities as inviting the other to a party; to a movie or to join the participant's club. The second factor, respect, included:

asking the other for opinion on important issues, voting for the other, and respecting the other's knowledge.

More recently, a series of studies by Singh and his colleagues showed that factor analyses of Byrne's (1971) Interpersonal Judgment Scale, the classical instrument measuring interpersonal attraction, repeatedly yielded two factors, called social and intellectual attraction. Ratings of liking and enjoyment of the target's person company loaded on the first, very strong factor, whereas ratings of intelligence and general knowledge loaded on the second, much weaker factor (Singh & Ho, 2000; Singh & Teoh, 1999). The social-intellectual distinction was also studied by Jamieson and colleagues who used this concept to discern between two dimensions of first impressions (i.e. the cognitive component of interpersonal attitudes) accompanied by similar two dimensions of attraction: liking and respect (i.e. the affective component of interpersonal attitudes) (Jamieson, Lydon & Zanna, 1987; Lydon, Jamieson & Zanna, 1988). Although liking and respect appeared highly correlated, they nevertheless showed substantial discriminant validity. Liking correlated more with the ascription of social than intellectual traits and the opposite was true for respect.

Finally, Wojciszke, Abele and Baryla (2009) defined liking-disliking as a response reflecting personal interests and preferences, such as fondness (loathing), attachment (dissociation), enjoyment (aversion), and so on, while respect-disrespect as a response which reflects high regard of and deference to a person. Using both experimental and correlational designs, these authors also showed that liking and respect are differently related to another person's agency and communion. Liking appeared more influenced by a target person's communion than agency, while respect appeared more influenced by his/her agency than communion. Moreover, mediation analyzes showed that the influence of communal information on liking was mediated by the perceived benevolence and morality of the target, whereas the influence of agentic information on respect was mediated by the inferred status potential of the target. This is consistent with the stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu, 2002; Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2008) and its prediction on the relationship between communion (warmth) and cooperation as well as between agency (competence) and status.

The Self-interest/Status Model (SSM)

To explain differences between liking and respect I propose here a *Self-interest/Status Model* (SSM) of interpersonal attitudes based on the idea that person perception and interpersonal attitudes are underlain by approach-avoidance in social contacts and an assumption that approach-avoidance relies upon two factors: own interests of the attitude-holder and status of the person towards whom the attitude is held. The SSM assumes that liking a person is based on monitoring of how the person bears on self-interests of the attitude holder. Results of this monitoring can influence liking in a direct and/or indirect way through moral traits ascription. I do not assume that

self-interest is the sole antecedent of liking – there are other sources of affection, such as mere exposure, evaluative conditioning or schema-based affective responses (see Wojciszke, 2011, for review). Nevertheless, it is assumed that monitoring of self-interest is an important mechanism (underlying numerous antecedents of attraction) which influences liking to a higher degree than respect.

Self-interest, Moral Judgments, and Liking

Arguably, self-interest is the single most important factor underlying interpersonal attitudes: We like those who promote and dislike those who dwarf our interests and well-being. This is because objects instrumental for goal-attainment are automatically evaluated in a more positive way than the same objects irrelevant for an active goal (Ferguson & Bargh, 2004). The same applies to persons who facilitate goal attainment – such persons are better liked by the perceiver who evaluates them more positively, draws closer to them, and approaches them more readily (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008).

Various antecedents of interpersonal attraction – similarity-dissimilarity, evaluations received from others, or positive-negative qualities of others – may be understood as variations on the same theme: liking is based on various gains and losses brought by other persons or at least associated with them. For example, Tesser's (1988) self-esteem maintenance model (SEM) shows convincingly this basic role of self-interest in interpersonal relations. Although commonsense and many theoretical models assume that individuals should be more attracted to persons the more positive qualities the latter present, SEM predicts that it all depends on the bearing of these positives on the own well-being of the former. When other's skills or achievements pertain to areas which define an individual's own self, successes of others threaten the individual's self-esteem due to social comparisons which results in negative emotions and distancing from the high achiever. However, when the area of other's successes happens to be irrelevant to an individual's own identity, she may be attracted to high achievers, looking for a closer contact with them to bask in reflected glory. In a similar vein, similarity (the strongest antecedent of liking) increases attraction to a higher degree when individuals are unsure of their own beliefs in need of similar others to support their validity (Worchel & McCromick, 1963). Thus, liking is increased not by the similarity per se but rather by its (usually positive) influence on the attitude holder's interests, especially in terms of self-esteem maintenance.

Status, Competence Judgments, and Respect

Status is ubiquitous in social life. Social groups differ in their status and so do individuals in face-to-face interactions. Numerous studies on interactions among strangers show that the differentiation in status emerges quickly and early in group formation, it may be based on scant information and appears even without any special incentives (e.g. when status ranking is irrelevant to the task

being solved). This led several researchers to postulate an automatic mechanism of status computation and monitoring, shared by humans with other primates (Burnstein & Braningen, 2001). Whether evolutionary evolved or not, status monitoring is undoubtedly very frequent and highly functional for the group life. Status decides on predictable differences in participation, influence, and power. It also influences expectancies and perceptions of contribution of group members to a common task, as well as access to the group's resources and their distribution among the group members (Fiske, 2010). For all these reasons, the awareness of other's status is important for individuals and it is assumed that this awareness results in feelings of respect toward other group members. Respect is based mainly on judgments of an individual's competence and abilities which decide on the individual's acquired and potential status. Wojciszke et al. (2009) showed that respect is more strongly influenced by agentic than communal qualities of a target person and that the influence of agentic information on respect is mediated by the inferred status potential of the target.

The status-agency link is postulated by virtually all explanations of status emergence and maintenance in social groups. For example, classical accounts of group life in functional terms assume that to exist and develop, groups have to achieve their goals (Parsons & Bales, 1955). Group goals are achieved or at least facilitated when competent and perky members are granted high status and influence within a group. Also the expectation states theory, the best developed and empirically supported account of status emergence, assumes the crucial role of individuals' agency in acquiring within-group prominence (Berger, Fiske & Norman, 1989). Members of task-oriented groups quickly develop performance expectations of each other and the more a person is anticipated to contribute to the group's goal, the higher her position – participation in group activities, influence on others, and chances to emerge as a leader. Although performance expectations may be initially based on factors like gender, race, or occupation, numerous studies show that such diffuse status characteristics are quickly overcome by specific status characteristics, that is, members' specific skills and abilities relevant for the current goal-attainment (see Ridgeway, 2001, for review).

Present Studies and Hypothesis

The link between communion-related qualities and liking as well as the link between agentic qualities and respects were shown by Wojciszke et al. (2009). Present studies aim to test further predictions of SSM that respect responses (and underlying judgments of agency) are socially shared to higher extent than liking responses (and underlying judgments of communion). The SSM assumption that liking is mostly based on self-interest implies a degree of idiosyncratic responding towards the same person or act. Current interests of different individuals participating in the same interaction may vary considerably and the target's behavior serving well interests of one person may dwarf well-being of others. Telling jokes about blondes may

amuse some interaction partners (the bald and brunettes) but infuriate or distaste others (blondes and intellectuals). It is a common wisdom that likes-dislikes do not require explanation nor justification (Zajonc, 1980). SSM assumes that respect responses are different: if they are based on status, they must be socially shared because status, like fame or bad reputation, cannot emerge and persist without a substantial social consensus. Group members may and tend to share various perceptions, beliefs, emotions and behavioral responses, especially after prolonged interaction (Tindale & Kameda, 2000), but a high degree of social sharedness is indispensable for some group phenomena to emerge at all, like norms, social identity, and status ranking. If the present analysis of differences between liking and respect is correct, it implies a similar differentiation between communion and agency judgments – the former may be idiosyncratic, but the latter should be more agreed upon.

This hypothesis was tested in two studies, in Study 1 where employees estimated liking and respect for their supervisors and in Study 2 where a Polish national sample rated two prominent politicians for communal and agentic traits. In each study some additional hypotheses were tested as well.

Study 1

The SSM assumes that liking is a personal response towards others based on their bearing on the individual's own good, while respect is a socially shared response based on others' standing in status hierarchy and their potential mobility within this hierarchy. Researchers of various theoretical orientations generally agree that status is construed collectively – these are groups who decide on whose social standing is high or low, according to whether an individual is endowed with qualities valued positively or negatively in a group (Fiske, 2010; Fiske, Xu, Cuddy, & Glick, 1999; Ridgeway, 2001). Therefore, respect should be more intersubjective in nature and shared by other group members. In consequence, respect is expected to be less variable within groups than liking of the same target persons. This hypothesis was tested in the present study where teams of employees rated their liking and respect for their supervisors.

Additionally, supervisors participating in this study filled a questionnaire measuring their preferred styles of behavior in conflict situations. The five measured styles result from the classical analysis of conflict behavior in terms of two orthogonal dimensions of self-interest and the interest of the partner (Thomas, 1992). These are Competition (maximization of own interest at the expense of a partner's interest), Cooperation (maximization of both interests), Accommodation (maximization of a partner's interest at the expense of own interest), Avoidance (minimization of both interests) and Compromise (partial realization of both interests). Of these, only Competition and Accommodation were analyzed here because they involve a clear contradiction between the self- vs. other-interest.

Based on the idea that liking stems from the attitude holder's self-interest it was predicted that supervisors showing accommodation will be well liked by their employees, while supervisors showing competition will be disliked. Predictions for respect were based on the idea that respect stems from status and that status involves not only agency but also pursuing self-interest on the part of the (high) status holder. Keltner, Gruenfeld and Anderson (2003) developed a theory linking an elevated power position with activation of the general approach system and a reduced power position with activation of the inhibition system. Data accumulated by these authors suggests that high power individuals show stronger and more disinhibited pursuing of their personal goals, even if against social norms. It is hypothesized that pursuing self-interest may be a part of the commonsense schema of a power holder, and filling this part of schema leads to respect (though disliking). In effect, it was predicted that leaders showing competition will be respected by their employees and leaders showing accommodation will tend to be disrespected.

Method

Participants. The participants were 212 employees (102 women) ranging in age from 20 to 53 years ($M = 28.90$) and their 53 supervisors (38 women, age from 23 to 57, $M = 36.28$). They were recruited from five private business organizations dealing in services. Each supervisor was rated by a group of 2-11 employees (4.00 persons on the average).

Measures. Employees filled a questionnaire dealing with various aspects of the organizational culture including scales of liking and respect towards their boss. The measure of liking consisted of 4 items (I like my boss, I feel close to my boss, I have warm feelings about my boss, I feel attracted to my boss). The measure of respect consisted of 4 items (I respect my boss. I hold my boss in high regard. My boss deserves admiration. My boss could be an example to others). All ratings were given on five-point scales ranging from definitely disagree (1) to it's hard to say (3) to definitely agree (5) Average ratings for each supervisor served as dependent measures of liking and respect.

Supervisors filled a Polish language Questionnaire of Behavior in Conflict Situation measuring five styles of conflict behavior: competition, accommodation, cooperation, compromise, and conflict avoidance (Klusek, 2009). Each of these styles is measured with 10 items referring to a declared frequency of own behaviors (from 1 = *never* to 5 = *always*) and the five resulting scales are of satisfactory reliability and validity. These five styles of conflict management seem to be cross-situational stable as they are strongly correlated when reported for very different interactions (e.g. in a work vs. family setting).

Only two of these scales are of interest here: Competition (reliability in the present sample was $\alpha = .92$) and Accommodation ($\alpha = .82$). Sample items measuring Competition are: When the matter is important, I try to win at all costs. I try to entirely crush the opposition. Items measuring Accommodation: For the sake of peace I say

“yes” even if I would like to say “no”. I adjust my actions to other side’s desires. I yield to others’ opinions if nothing else can be done. The participants were asked to report their conflict-related behavior in a work setting in general (not in relation to their subordinates specifically).

Results and Discussion

Variation of liking and respect. To test the hypothesis of a more consensual nature of respect than liking, a coefficient of variation was computed for both these variables according to the formula $V = (SD/M) 100\%$, where SD = standard deviation and M = mean. This index was used because the team average ratings varied greatly as a function of the rated leader which rendered the raw standard deviations incomparable. The coefficients were computed separately for each team and, thereby, each boss received two coefficients – one for respect and one for liking. The coefficients were then compared by Student’s t test for dependent measures. The mean variation coefficient appeared higher for liking ($M = 20.44$) than respect ($M = 17.15$) and this difference was statistically significant, $t(52) = 2.23, p < .05, d = .62$. The lower variability of respect than liking responses is consistent with the hypothesis that respect is socially shared (and construed collectively) to a higher degree than liking.

Table 1. First and Second Order Correlations between Competition and Accommodation Declared by Supervisors and Their Liking and Respect as Rated by Their Subordinates (Study 1)

	First order correlation		Second order correlation	
	Liking	Respect	Liking	Respect
Competition	-.11	-.04	-.26*	.22 ^a
Accommodation	.06	-.03	.25*	-.24*

Note. ^a $p < .06$. * $p < .05$

Conflict styles and liking vs. respect. To test the remaining hypotheses I correlated Competition and Accommodation as declared by the leaders with the averaged ratings of liking and respect provided by their subordinates. Due to the contradictory expectations involving respect and liking, no relations were predicted on the level of zero-order correlations. However, I expected a positive correlation between leaders’ accommodation and subordinates’ liking when controlled for respect and a negative correlation between competition and liking when controlled for respect. As can be seen in Table 1, partial correlation analyses supported both these predictions. Moreover, an opposite pattern emerged for respect (when controlled for liking): whereas leaders’ competition was positively related to respect, accommodation was negatively related to respect ratings given by their subordinates.

Though significant, all these correlations were weak. However, several factors worked against obtaining strong correlations in the present design. The competition and accommodation measures came from persons different from those who provided the liking and respect ratings (leaders and subordinates, respectively). Whereas the

former came from single persons, the latter where averages coming from several teams of (2 to 11) persons. Finally, the object of the liking and respect ratings (i.e. the boss) varied from team to team, which undoubtedly increased the error variance of these ratings. Still, the emerging pattern of correlation appeared consistent with expectations.

Importantly, the present operationalization of self-interest goes beyond the information on the target person’s communion which was provided to participants in studies presented in Wojciszke, Abele and Baryła (2009). Despite this difference in operationalization, self-interest strongly influenced liking in a manner postulated by the SSM. Those leaders who promoted interests of their followers (i.e. showed accommodation) were liked by them and those who dwarfed interests of their subordinates (i.e. showed competition) were disliked. Interestingly, leaders who promoted their own interests (at the expense of their followers’ interests) tended to be respected, and leaders minimizing their own interests tended to be disrespected by their followers.

Study 2

Study 1 showed the variation of liking to be higher than variation of respect. Though significant, this difference was small in absolute terms, probably due to the error variance being inflated by the changing targets of ratings. Therefore, I turned to a context where the same target persons were rated by various observers. I used data from a Polish national sample which rated various communal and agentic related traits of two leading politicians. It was reasoned that if respect is socially shared to a higher degree than liking, the same should apply to the cognitive bases of these affective responses, that is, judgments of agency and communion. Judgments of agentic traits were expected to show a lower variability than judgments of communal traits for each of the politicians.

Moreover, because the participants’ own political standing was measured and one of the politicians was of the right while another was of the left orientation, the present study enabled also another test of the self-interest hypothesis. It was predicted that the more rightist the participants’ own political orientation, the more positive their ratings of a rightist politician and the more negative their ratings of a leftist politician. These correlations should be stronger for communal than agentic judgments of the politicians, in line with the hypothesis that self-interest is reflected to a higher degree in communal than agency judgments.

Method

Participants. A representative national sample of Polish adults ($N = 1067$) was surveyed at the end of November 1998. The participants were sampled and surveyed by a private opinion polls firm. The sample structure was virtually identical to that of the Polish population (as described in the official governmental statistics) in terms of sex, age, education, and place of living (village vs. town vs. city). The participants’ age varied from

18 to 93 years, with median 41 years; half of the participants were men, half women.

Measures. The survey consisted of several questions about sociopolitical issues (cf. Wojciszke, 2001). Included were queries about 8 traits of the then Polish president (A. Kwasniewski) and the then vice-premier and minister of finance (L. Balcerowicz). At the time of the survey they were both highly recognized figures and one of them represented the political right (vice-premier), the other represented the left. A question about a trait read: How much do you believe A. Kwasniewski is [trait name]? The respondents showed their answers choosing one of the seven options (printed on a card) ranging from 1 (*Do not believe at all*), to 4 (*Neither believe nor disbelieve*), to 7 (*Strongly believe*).

The traits were selected from a list of trait names pre-rated by different groups of pilot participants for various features including global favorability, communality-relatedness and agency-relatedness. Four traits (truthful, just, dishonest, and egoistic) were selected to be strongly related to communality (9.31 on the average) but weakly to agency (2.66). Four traits (clever, intelligent, unresourceful, and inefficient) were selected to be strongly related to agency (9.26) and weakly to communality (2.29) and of similar favorability as the previous four.

Coefficients of variation were computed for each trait of each politician using the same formula as in Study 1. To enable individual comparisons between traits a confidence interval was computed for each coefficient.

Participants' own political orientation was measured using their voting intentions. At the time of the survey Poland was very far from a two-party system familiar in the US and several other democracies. On the opposite – as many as seven parties were represented in the Polish parliament, their electorates were unstable and various parties of a similar political standing competed for the same potential voters who hesitated in their choice between parties of similar orientations. Therefore, to measure voting intentions, the participants were asked to divide 100% of their voting intention among the various parties (and the “do not intend to vote” option). This measure of voting intention proved a good predictor of the previous election results in Poland. The political orientation was indexed as a sum of percentages assigned by a participant to four parties generally considered as rightist (their acronyms: AWS, ChD, ROP, UW) minus a sum of percentages assigned to

three leftist parties (SLD, UP, PSL). It was, then, an index of a rightist political orientation.

Results and Discussion

Variation of morality and competence judgments. As can be seen in Table 2, coefficients of variation were invariably smaller for the agency-related than communal traits, for both politicians and independently of whether the trait was positive or negative. Inspection of confidence intervals shows that within the same target person every single agency trait showed a smaller variation than any single communal trait. In effect, despite the extremely small number of degrees of freedom, the difference between communal and agency traits appeared significant for both the president, $t(6) = 3.99, p < .001, d = 3.26$, and vice-premier, $t(6) = 2.99, p < .01, d = 2.44$.

Table 2. Variation Coefficients (with Confidence Intervals) for Communion and Agency-Related Traits Ascribed to Two Leading Politicians by a Polish National Sample (N = 1067) (Study 2)

	Political figure	
	President	Vice premier
Truthful	33.5 (31.5-35.7)	32.5 (30.6-34.6)
Just	30.5 (28.6-32.3)	36.6 (34.3-39.0)
Dishonest	29.5 (27.8-31.3)	28.8 (27.1-30.6)
Egoistic	29.1 (27.4-30.9)	32.4 (30.5-34.5)
Communion (averaged)	30.7	32.6
Intelligent	18.4 (17.4-19.4)	21.7 (20.5-22.9)
Clever	21.8 (20.6-23.0)	23.5 (22.2-24.9)
Unresourceful	23.9 (22.5-25.3)	26.3 (24.8-27.9)
Inefficient	26.6 (25.0-28.1)	30.0 (28.2-31.8)
Agency (averaged)	22.7	25.4

Altogether, the present results support the idea of a higher consensus on the cognitive bases of respect than liking: There is more consensus about traits referring to agency or lack of agency of a politician, than about traits referring to his communion or lack of communal properties. In the case of supervisors evaluated in Study 1 such consensus is probably reached in direct, face-to-face interactions of their subordinates. In the case of national leaders evaluated in the present study, this consensus is probably reached through mass-media, where the personal

Table 3. Correlations (r) Between Participants' Own Political Orientation (Left-Right) and Their Judgments of Communion and Agency of Two Politicians (National Sample, Study 2, N=1067).

	M (SD)	President (left) Agency	President (left) Communion	Vice-premier (right) Agency	Vice-premier (right) Communion
Participants' Political Orientation	4.00 (78.41)	-.34** _a	-.49** _a	.04 _b	.16** _b
President (left) Agency	5.22 (.90)		.59**	.40**	.05
President (left) Communion	4.27 (1.08)			.05	.01
Vice-premier (right) Agency	5.13 (.99)				.45**
Vice-premier (right) Communion	3.99 (1.07)				

Note. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

a $z = 5.88, p < .001$ - a test of difference between correlations from one sample.

b $z = 3.16, p < .001$ - a test of difference between correlations from one sample.

virtues and drawbacks of prominent politicians are frequently presented and discussed.

Political orientation and judgments of politicians. I also computed correlation between the participants' own political leaning and their judgments of various traits of the two politicians. As can be seen in Table 3, the participants' own leaning to the right correlated negatively with the averaged judgments of the president (a left-oriented politician) but positively with the judgments of the vice-premier (a right-oriented politician). More importantly, the correlations appeared significantly stronger for communion than agency. Because the traits from the two domains were balanced for their global favorability, this difference cannot be attributed to a mere preference for a politician of similar beliefs and a depreciation of the politician of beliefs dissimilar to those held by the participants. These differences suggest that the participant's self-interest (this time tapped as congruence between own and the target's political orientation) is more strongly related to judgments of communion than agency.

There is an asymmetry in correlations pertaining to the president (which are generally higher) and to the vice-premier (which are generally lower, indeed, for the agency ascription the correlation was nonexistent). This may reflect idiosyncratic differences between the two politicians. Whereas the president was always a leftist (in the old regime he used to be a member of the communist party, reforming himself to a social-democrat after the collapse of communism), the vice-premier showed his orientation to the right only after the change of the system (in the old regime he also was a member of the communist party).

General Discussion

In Study 1 it was found that employees agreed with each other to higher extent when rating respect than liking of their supervisors. Study 2 showed that a Polish national sample agreed to a higher extent when rating agency-related than communal traits of two prominent politicians. These differences suggest that respect (and underlying judgments of agency) are socially shared to a higher degree than liking (and underlying judgments of communion).

In Studies 1 and 2 the operationalization of self-interest which differed greatly from the paper-and-pencil information on the target's personality traits or actions was used. When the supervisor's bearing on the employees' interests is measured by his or her self-described styles of conflict management, the liking response is still guided by the self-interest logic – it is positively correlated with the accommodation and negatively correlated with the competition showed by a leader. Interestingly, respect shows an opposite pattern. Whereas supervisors showing accommodation are respected relatively less, supervisors showing competition are respected more. It seems that some measure of egoism, or at least of self-protection, may actually facilitate respect, though it inhibits liking. This may help to understand a paradox in attitudes towards politicians, the power holders in democratic societies. In many democracies politicians are typically disliked,

suspected of corruption and arrogance, still incumbents are duly elected, more frequently than challengers, especially in parliamentary elections (Butler, 2009; Hainmueller & Kern, 2008; Lee, 2008).

Status and agency are closely related because agency enables individuals to acquire high status positions within a group. Interestingly, the agency-status link may be also strong for a complementary reason: perceptions of agency are frequently formed in a way which justifies and reinforces the existing status differentiation. A sizeable number of studies shows that followers overestimate the influence and input of their leaders, especially when the group performance is extreme or takes place in dramatic conditions (Chemers, 2001). Leaders are just like followers: they overestimate their own performance and underestimate task-functioning and agency of their subordinates (see Georgesen & Harris, 1998, for meta-analysis). Fiske and her colleagues showed the same agency-status link on the level of group stereotypes: stereotypes function to justify the status-quo and groups of high social status are perceived as more agent and the two perceptions are highly correlated (Fiske et al., 2002).

Maximizing self-interest is the basic fact of life as well as a prominent presumption of many important concepts and tenets of psychology, like reinforcement, self-presentation and self-serving bias, social dilemmas and conflicts, or subjective utility models of decision making and attitudes, to name just a few. Most theories involving those concepts would simply not exist without the assumption of a strong motivation to maximize self-interest. By comparison, social cognition (especially person perception) theorizing and research seem to be relatively void of self-interest concerns. But it is suspected that social perceivers are as much driven by their self-interests as self-presenters or decision makers – all the time these are the same people after all. Moreover communal traits ascription is the area where the influence of self-interest on person perception operates in the most important way. This was recently shown by Bocian and Wojciszke (2014a) who found in three studies that persons acting for the perceiver's material interest were better liked by him or her (and rated as more moral) even when the actions involved norm-breaking and cheating. Tellingly, the influences of self-interest involvement on both liking and communion ratings were very large.

I would like to stress that SSM does not assume the self-interest to be the sole antecedent of communal traits judgment nor liking. The model and the present research is just focused on self-interest because it has been a somewhat neglected variable in the area of communal traits judgment and person perception in general. Obviously, communal judgment can be influenced by abstract principles of moral conduct (Bocian & Wojciszke, 2014b), although it seems to be the case mainly when evaluated actions or persons do not have strong bearing on the evaluators' self-interest and when the evaluators are held publicly accountable for their moral judgment, because accountability calls for objectivity and straightens up numerous biases (Tetlock, 1992). Typically, actions maintaining moral principles bring at least potential

benefits to the perceiver, while breaking moral rules results in his or her harm. When my salary depends on my productivity, both the principle of distributive justice and my self-interest are satisfied – as far as I am a productive employee of my university. This is obviously not so when I am an unproductive person: The rule is satisfied when my salary is low, but the self-interest cries for as high pay as possible. Although there are results showing that people do not feel good when overpaid in one way or another, the feeling is much less acute compared to situation when they perceive themselves underpaid (Greenberg, 1996). Then, in virtually every country we have numerous scandals involving managers who appropriate huge bonuses despite poor performance and losses of companies they manage, which suggests that being unfairly overpaid is not such a bad situation. Generally speaking, there are situations when communal judgments based on general rules versus self-interest tend to be discrepant – when the same action of another person increases the perceiver's self-interest but breaks a principle or when an action minimizes his or her self-interest but conforms to a principle. Such situations are amenable to an extension of the present analyzes using the self-interest logic (Bocian & Wojciszke, 2014b), although such an endeavor is clearly beyond the scope of this work.

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